THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

VOL. VIII.—OCTOBER, 1883.—No. 32.

THE LAW OF PRAYER.

"Prayer moves the Hand that moves the universe."
GURNALL'S *Christian Armor.*

"Hast thou not learn'd what thou art often told,
A truth still sacred, and believed of old,
That no success attends on spears and swords
Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's?"
COWPER.—*Expostulation.*

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."
TENNYSON.—*Morte d'Arthur.*

I.

SOME years ago, in a Southern city, I was requested by a Catholic lady to call on her husband, who was suffering from a fatal distemper, though his mental faculties were unimpaired. This gentleman had been brought up by his father in the school of Voltaire and his associates, whose infidel teachings he had imbibed, and he avowed himself not only an unbeliever in Catholic faith, but even a skeptic, as far as all revealed religion was concerned.

Knowing the bent of his mind on the subject of religion, I endeavored, at some length and by every argument at my command, to remove his objections to Christianity, and to prepare him for the rational acceptance of our holy religion.

After listening to me with great patience and close attention, he

courteously, but frankly informed me that my remarks had made no impression on him whatever, and that between him and me there was an impassable gulf, which no reasoning of mine could bridge over.

Although mortified and discouraged by his candid reply, I did not despair, but resumed the conversation, which was, in substance, as follows:

"You certainly acknowledge," said I, "the existence of a Supreme Being, the Author of creation, and the living Source of all life?"

"Every man," he replied, "that uses his brains, must concede that truth."

"You will further admit," I continued, "that, as the Author of all being is omniscient and all-seeing, He knows our condition; as He is omnipotent, He has the power to succor us; and, as He is infinitely good, He is not indifferent or insensible to the wants of His creatures, especially of those whom He has endowed with an immortal soul and an intelligent nature. He does not cast them off from His thoughts, as the loosened fragment is thrown off from a planet and hurled into space. He, from whom all paternity is derived, must have, in an eminent and perfect degree, those paternal sentiments which a father has for his child."

"That truth," he answered, "irresistibly follows from our conception of a Being supremely intelligent, powerful, and beneficent."

"Is it not reasonable to suppose," I added, "that a Creator so benevolent and paternal, will be moved by our entreaties, and that He will mercifully hearken to our petitions?"

"I cannot deny," he said, "the reasonableness of your conclusion."

"Then, you admit," I observed, "the utility of prayer, and I ask you to promise me to offer up to this Supreme and Providential Ruler this short supplication: O God, give me light to see the truth, and strength to follow it!"

He made me an earnest promise to repeat this prayer day after day, with all the fervor of his heart.

Some days later, I received a pressing message from my invalid friend to visit him again, as soon as possible. I did so, and, on entering his room, I was sensibly impressed with the glow of enthusiasm which shone on his face, and which had succeeded his former forlorn and desponding expression. Before I had time to address him, he burst forth into an eloquent profession of faith in the divinity of the Christian religion, and spoke in language at once so simple and connected, so luminous and penetrating, that I have never lost the impression which his words made on me. He begged, then and there, for the grace of baptism, if he were deemed

worthy of receiving it. Some weeks afterward he died, fortified and consoled by the sacraments of the Church.

Here is a striking instance of the power of prayer and of the direct interposition of God in the conversion and illumination of a soul without the help or agency of man. One ray of divine light had effected what no force of reasoning could accomplish. In his tribulation, he sought God and found Him, and with Him he found light and peace and rest.

The yearning voice issuing from this man's heart, was but the echo of the voice of humanity. It was the expression of a sentiment indelibly engraved on the soul of mankind. This divine spark may lie smouldering for years, buried under the accumulated weight of pernicious maxims and worldly preoccupations; but it needs only calm introspection and a ray of divine grace to rekindle it into a flame.

As the world has never yet beheld, and never will behold a nation of atheists, so will the sun never shine on a nation that does not worship God. And prayer is an essential element of divine worship. No people have ever existed, whether ancient or modern, savage or civilized, Jew or Gentile, Pagan or Christian, that have not poured forth supplications to the Deity.

Just as the first cry of infancy is a wail of sorrow, and the last expression of expiring old age is a sigh of grief, even so do we hear the voice of prayer at the very source of human life; and its plaintive notes have never ceased, but grow louder and louder as the stream of life advances, and this voice will continue till the human stream has run its course, and is swallowed up in the ocean of eternity.

The forms, indeed, of worship and supplication have differed widely among men, but the language of the heart has always been the same.

The Holy Scripture, which contains the history of God's people from the days of Adam till after our Saviour's Resurrection, records their abiding faith in the efficacy of prayer. And the most ancient authors of Greece and Rome attest the belief of the Pagan world in the duty of propitiating the Deity by prayers and sacrifice. The language of Homer represents the sentiments of all ancient heathen writers:

> "The gods (the only great, and only wise)
> Are moved by offerings, vows, and sacrifice;
> Offending man their high compassion wins,
> And daily prayers atone for daily sins." [1]

The practice of prayer is not less strongly commended by the philosopher Pythagoras:

[1] Iliad, B. ix.

"In all thou dost, first let thy prayers ascend,
And to the gods thy labors first commend:
From them implore success, and hope a prosperous end." [1]

How are we to account for the practice of prayer, so widespread, so uninterrupted, so deeply-rooted in our nature? This universal aspiration springs from a sense of our misery and utter dependence, and from an innate conviction of God's infinite power and mercy. Let us analyze our soul by the light of reason and faith:

1st. As to our intellect: its light, in the best of us, is very dim, and that light is obscured by passion and prejudice, by pride and presumption. Our judgment is so easily biassed and warped, especially where our personal interests or predilections are concerned. The famous Electoral Commission is well remembered. It was organized with the view of determining which of the two candidates was duly elected President, in 1876. The members of the Commission were chosen from the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the Supreme Court of the United States—the most grave and exalted deliberative bodies in the country. Seven members of the Commission belonged to one political party, and eight members to another, each member invariably voting for his party candidate. Was this the result of accident, or of honest conviction, or political bias? Let the reader decide for himself. If neither the restraints of senatorial and judicial decorum, nor the momentous issues involved, nor the spectacle of a whole nation anxiously awaiting the decision, could divest this illustrious court of partisan bias, how are we to escape the dangers of a perverted judgment, when we have no monitor to guide us save the voice of duty, which is often silenced by the clamors of self-interest? How many of us are like that blind man, mentioned in the Gospel, after his sight was partially restored by our Saviour: "I see men," he says, "as it were trees, walking." [2] We magnify the things around us, we exaggerate the importance of passing, petty scenes, and we are blind to the great, everlasting truths, confronting us like the stars of heaven in their immovable splendor. There is no truth, no matter how evident and luminous, which men have not denied or doubted, even though it be the existence of God, or their own very existence. There is no error, how monstrous and absurd soever it may be, which men have not espoused; they have bowed down and worshipped as gods the work of their own hands.

2d. Our heart is as much influenced by outward impressions as the thermometer is affected by the fluctuations of the weather. What is man's unregenerate heart but a tumultuous sea continually tossed about by the winds of conflicting passions? To-day, it is transported by impetuous, capricious, criminal, ambitious desires,

[1] Golden Rule (Rowe's Trans.) [2] Mark viii. 24.

which rapidly succeed one another, like wave rushing on wave. To-morrow, it is disquieted by vain, frivolous fears and anxieties, tormented by the dread of some impending calamity, or oppressed by the weight of cares, despondency, sorrow, and tribulation. At intervals, it enjoys a treacherous calm, lulled to sleep and fancied security by the soft breath of some unlawful gratification, or some fascinating intrigue. Then, again, it is agitated by the furious storms of anger, bitterness, jealousy, hatred, revenge, and remorse.

3d. Our will is so weak and vacillating. We are so prompt and generous in forming good resolutions, and so remiss in keeping them; so courageous when no enemy is at hand, so cowardly when the tempter confronts us. We glide so readily down the slippery path of vice, we ascend with such faltering steps, the steep hill of virtue and self-denial. What is the history of each day, but a record of pledges broken, of vows to God unredeemed, and of humiliating defeats on the battlefield of this world!

Where shall I find light for my intellect, comfort for my heart, strength for my will? In vain shall I look for them in the writings or conversation of men who eliminate the Providence of God from the moral government of the world, and who, consequently, reject prayer from their system of philosophy, who declare that man is all-sufficient for himself. These men may dazzle me by their glittering generalities, but they convey no truth to my mind; they may captivate me by their specious declamation, or entertain me by their curious speculations, but they do not heal the wounds of my heart. They may arouse in me a momentary enthusiasm and excite some emotional feelings, but they give no energy to my will, they do not inspire me with heroic or generous resolutions, because they furnish me with no exalted motives of action. I rise from the perusal of their works with a bewildered mind, a sadder, though not a wiser man.

This light and consolation and strength are to be found only in God, the Source of all intelligence, the Father of all consolation, the Lord of strength, and prayer is the great channel through which this spiritual illumination, comfort, and strength are communicated to us.

In prayer we are led like Moses up the holy mountain, away from the noise and bustle and tumult of the world. There God removes the scales from our eyes; He dispels the clouds of passion, or prejudice, or ignorance by which our mind was obscured; He enlarges our mental vision. A flood of heavenly light is shed upon us, which enables us to penetrate the hidden things of God. Hence, the Psalmist says: "Come ye to Him and be enlightened."[1]

Standing on that mountain, we see the shortness of time. How

[1] Ps. xxxiii. 6.

it passes before us like a fleeting shadow! We contemplate the immeasurable length of eternity. We are penetrated with a profound sense of the majesty and greatness of God, and of the littleness of man; or, if we observe anything good and noble in man, it is because, like the atom in the sunbeam, he basks in the sunshine of divine grace.

We see how paltry and contemptible are all things earthly and, like St. John, we get a glimpse of the Heavenly Jerusalem. In prayer, we are struck by the hideousness of sin, when it is presented before us in its naked deformity, stripped of its specious attractions and false charms. We become enamoured of virtue when we discover how graceful and beautiful a queen she is. So attractive are the charms of virtue as she reveals herself to us in prayer, that we can say of her in the words of Wisdom: "I preferred her before kingdoms and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison of her. Neither did I compare unto her any precious stone: for, all gold, in comparison of her, is as a little sand, and silver, in respect to her, shall be counted as clay. I loved her above health and beauty, and chose to have her instead of light; for her light cannot be put out. Now all good things came to me together with her, and innumerable riches through her hands."[1]

Sometimes God is even pleased to reveal to His saints in prayer a knowledge of His mysteries without noise of words or the labor of study. It was in response to prayer that God revealed to Daniel the mysteries of the future.[2] It was during the ecstasy of prayer, that He revealed to St. Paul the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: "I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago. . . . . He was caught up into Paradise, and heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter."[3]

St. Thomas Aquinas was, perhaps, the most profound thinker the world has produced since the dawn of Christianity. His vast mind ranges over the entire field of philosophy and theology. His writings are an inexhaustible storehouse to which the secular, as well as the ecclesiastical student, has recourse in every age. This great divine, being asked whence he drew his knowledge, declared that he learned more in silent meditation than in the study of books.

It is true, indeed, that God vouchsafes to very few those extraordinary illuminations with which He favored the Prophet Daniel, the Apostle of the Gentiles, and the Angel of the Schools, because these gifts are not essential to man's happiness. But He will give to all of us in prayer that which is essential, the light necessary to deliver us from the illusions of our senses, our imagination, and false judgment; He will grant us that practical wisdom which is

[1] Wisd. vii. 8–11. [2] Dan. ii. 19. [3] II. Cor. xii. 2–4.

needed to guide us in the duties of our daily life. If, like Moses, we consulted God's mercy-seat every morning, and offered to Him the sacrifice of supplication, we would stumble into fewer pitfalls in the course of the day. We are often surprised and worsted by the enemy, as Josue was deceived by the Gabaonites, because, like him, we "consulted not the mouth of the Lord."[1]

In prayer, our heart is inflamed with devotion and dilated with joy, because we feel that we are in the presence of the God of all consolation, whose Spirit, like the sun, warms while it enlightens. In prayer, the agitation of the heart is quieted, because, in communion with our Maker, grace is imparted to us not only to subdue our inordinate ambition, but even to moderate our laudable and legitimate desires and aspirations. St. Ignatius dearly loved the illustrious Society of Jesus which he had founded. Being once asked whether he could survive its extinction, he replied: "I would need but a quarter of an hour's meditation to reconcile me to its dissolution."

Those earthly things which we so eagerly crave, appear small and trivial when calmly weighed in the scales of the Sanctuary, and the sufferings and trials we endure seem short and momentary when measured with the line of eternity.

It is as easy for our Lord, in answer to our supplication, to heal the hidden wounds of our soul, as it was to cure the corporal maladies of those that appealed to Him. It is as easy for Him to calm our tumultuous passions, as it was to say to the winds and waves: "Peace, be still." When Peter was afraid of sinking on the lake of Galilee, he cried out: "Lord, save me,"[2] and our Saviour enabled him to walk on the waters and reach the boat in safety. And, if we implore our God with the faith of the Apostle, and in the fervent words of the Psalmist: "Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord," we shall walk triumphantly on the troubled waters of our heart which threaten to engulf us.

We are told by St. Luke that, while Jesus was praying in the garden of Gethsemani, "there appeared to Him an angel from heaven strengthening Him."[3] What a touching symbol was this heavenly messenger of the angel of consolation whom God sends to us in prayer, to pour some soothing drops into our bitter chalice!

In communion with God the energies of our will are braced and invigorated, and our moral courage is strengthened. Observe with what confidence the child, when conscious of danger, rushes into the arms of its mother. There it reposes as in an ark of safety. The mother's warm heart banishes all sense of fear, and her entwining arms brace the child with courage. And so, when we flee with confidence to the arms of our Heavenly Father, we go forth

[1] Josue ix. 14. [2] Matt. xiv. 30. [3] Luke xxii. 43.

from His presence renewed in strength and resolved to do what human weakness could not of itself accomplish.

With the Apostle of the Gentiles, the man of prayer can exclaim: "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me."[1]

Before entering the Cenacle, in Jerusalem, to pray, the Apostles were weak, timid, vacillating men. In the supreme hour of trial, they all fled from their Master, leaving Him in the hands of His enemies. Their leader, when questioned by a maid, denied with an oath that he knew his Master. But, after spending ten days in prayer, these same Apostles are armed with superhuman courage. They boldly proclaim themselves the disciples of Him whom they had before forsaken or denied, and they go "from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus."[2]

It was after fervent prayer that Judith undertook the hazardous mission of entering the camp of Holophernes, and rescuing the children of Israel from impending danger. It was after prayer and fasting, that Esther, at the risk of her life, saved the Jewish race from the sentence of death pronounced against them by King Assuerus. It was prayer that inspired the foundation of every religious Community that has existed in the Church, and these Communities have usually encountered at their birth poverty, privations, and formidable opposition.

The same spirit of prayer which has inspired apostolic men and women in every age to undertake herculean works in the cause of religion and humanity, has also nerved the soldier with martial prowess and endued him with superhuman courage. He knew that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong,"[3] and that God is called "the Lord of hosts," or armies as well as "the God of peace," because it is He that gives victory to the warrior, as well as peace to the troubled spirit. Josue and Gedeon and Judas Machabeus were men of military renown, and they accomplished deeds of valor superior to human strength, *because* they were men of prayer and invoked the Lord of hosts.

Who was more daring and courageous in war than David? David, who, when a boy, strangled a lion and a bear; who, when yet a young man, slew the giant Goliath; David, of whom the daughters of Israel sang: "Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands;"[4] David, who conquered the Philistines, the Amalecites, the Syrians, the Moabites, and the Ammonites, and who crowned his victories by conquering his resentment and sparing the life of his unrelenting persecutor Saul.

And who surpassed David in piety and the spirit of prayer? He habitually invokes the God of battles before engaging in war. He

[1] Phil. iv. 13. [2] Acts v. 41. [3] Eccles. IX. 11. [4] I. Kings xviii. 7.

blesses the Lord who nerved his arm for the contest: "Blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands to fight, and my fingers to war."[1] And when his enemy is overcome, he humbly ascribes the victory not to his own prowess, but to the Lord of hosts.

Many Christian heroes have emulated the devotion of the pious King of Juda. From a host of Christian warriors, I may select one representative, John Sobieski. In 1683, the city of Vienna was besieged by a Turkish army numbering 300,000 men. After a siege of forty-five days, the city was on the eve of surrendering, and a secret message was sent to Sobieski, urging him to hasten to the relief of the beleaguered city. His troops together with the German allies numbered about 70,000 men. Before descending from the heights of Calemberg, the army of Sobieski assembled to pray, the leader himself serving the Mass. So successful was the attack that the besiegers were utterly routed, leaving 20,000 Moslems dead outside of the walls. The next day, the *Te Deum* was sung in thanksgiving for the victory, Sobieski intoning the anthem. His letter to the Pope announcing the victory, was a modest paraphrase of the memorable words of Cæsar: "I came, I saw, God conquered."

Happening to be in Paris at the opening of the Franco-Prussian war, I was grieved to hear some of the French soldiers so far forgetful of the faith and chivalry of their heroic forefathers as to avow that their god was the mitrailleuse. They soon discovered to their cost that their idol proved as impotent and treacherous to them, as Dagon was to the Philistines. The German Emperor, on the contrary, was accustomed to invoke the aid of Heaven on the eve of an engagement, and to thank God for victories won. On the evening before the battle of Sedan, the chant that filled the air from every German camp, was not the song of ribaldry, but the glorious hymn, "Now let us all thank God."[2] They prayed, they fought, they conquered.

The light, comfort, and strength which prayer imparts to our intellectual and moral nature, is not the only benefit resulting from this exercise; its blessing is still more enhanced by the assurance of our Saviour that God will grant us what we fervently ask, provided that the object of our petition redounds to our spiritual welfare. If a man of unbounded wealth, of large benevolence, and unimpeachable veracity, pledged himself to do you a great favor, how gladly would you have recourse to him! But here you have the Giver of all good gifts, the Father of all consolation, the God of truth, promising in the most formal manner to grant you all your reasonable petitions: "Ask," He says, "and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you.

[1] Ps. cxliii. 1. [2] Nun danket Alle Gott.

For every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Or what man is there among you of whom if his son shall ask bread, will he reach him a stone? Or if he shall ask him a fish, will he reach him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more will your Father, who is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"[1]

Again, He solemnly inculcates the duty and advantage of prayer: "Amen, amen, I say to you: If you ask the Father *anything* in My name, He will give it to you." He even reproaches His disciples for their neglect to pray: "Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name: Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full."[2]

The obligation to pray becomes still more imperative and its neglect is more inexcusable, when we consider the sovereign majesty of Him whom we address, and the facility with which we can have recourse to the throne of grace.

To have a private audience with a distinguished crowned head is always deemed a great honor and privilege, although certain formalities must be observed before the audience can be obtained. You are required to appear in court-dress; you must hand in your card, or present a letter of introduction, stating who you are and the object of your visit; you must await the monarch's good pleasure in the ante-room, till he appoints the time and place for the interview. He can spare you but a few moments, he may be secretly bored by your presence, and he will dismiss you with a formal bow and a faint smile, whilst you esteem yourself exceptionally favored if he bestows some gift upon you. And so elated are you by the interview that you devour every word uttered by royalty with as much avidity as Lazarus desired to be filled with the crumbs which fell from the table of Dives, and you treasure up the gift he bestowed with as much care as you would preserve a saintly relic.

But how much greater is the honor to be admitted into the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords, to converse familiarly with Him, and to present to Him your petitions!

And to be favored with an interview with the Divine Majesty you have not to appear in court-dress. The garment He desires you to wear is the robe of innocence, or the sackcloth of humiliation. You are not obliged to be furnished with a letter of introduction, for no one knows you as well as your Creator. You are not compelled to wait till the place of interview is appointed, for He is everywhere. He restricts you to no time, because He is never engaged, or preoccupied, but always at home, always ready

[1] Matt. vii. 7–11. [2] John xvi. 23, 24.

to receive and hear you: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the just; and His ears unto their prayers."[1] And when you enter His holy presence, you need not have your petition engrossed on vellum or satin, expressed in choice language and well-rounded periods. Those eloquent and impressive prayers of which we sometimes read in the papers, reach no farther, I fear, than their authors intended them to go. They tickle men's ears, but do not pierce the clouds. To such prayers we can apply the words which God saith in Job: "Who is he that wrappeth up sentences in unskilful words?"[2] The prayers which move the heart of God are those which flow directly from the soul, such as the prayer of the publican when he cried out: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

You are not ordinarily required to clothe your prayers in any words at all. It is sufficient to express them in thought; for thoughts are acts in the sight of God, who is the searcher of the hearts and the reins of men. Nay, there are times when your prayer may be most acceptable in the sight of God, though your mental conceptions may assume no definite shape, and though they formulate no particular need. Your prayer will be most salutary, if you place yourself in the attitude of a suppliant, like Magdalen speechless at the feet of her Lord, humbly bewailing your misery, adoring the loving-kindness of your God, and patiently awaiting the action of divine grace on your soul, like the infirm multitude that lay around the pool of Bethsaida, waiting till the angel descended into the water.[3]

To sum up: Prayer is the most exalted function in which man can be engaged, because it exercises the highest faculties of the soul,—the intellect and the will; it brings us into direct communication with the greatest of all beings,—God Himself; it is the channel of Heaven's choicest blessings; it excludes no one, it embraces all in the circle of its benedictions; it gives us access to our Heavenly Father at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. In a word, prayer renders us coöperators with our Creator in the moral government of the world, since many of the events of life are shaped in accordance with our pious entreaties. Conceive, then, the dignity of God's saints. The affairs of life are decreed from all eternity; and the eternal decrees themselves are in a measure, regulated by the prayers of His servants. "Prayer moves the Hand that moves the universe."

II.

The remaining portion of this article will be devoted to the consideration and refutation of some of the most popular objections urged against prayer.

---

[1] Ps. xxxiii. 16. [2] Job xxxviii. 2. [3] John v. 2–4.

1st. Some men have condemned the practice of prayer as vain,[1] on the assumption that there is no Providence.

If the assumption were correct, their conduct would be logical. But this objection need not detain us, as the existence of a Providence, and the reality of a divine government can easily be demonstrated.

2d. All prayers have reference to some future event. In all our petitions, we ask God to grant us some temporal or spiritual favor, or to avert some calamity. Now, all future events are foreordained by the eternal decrees of the Divine Legislator and regulated by His immutable laws. Therefore, our prayers cannot alter these laws, and hence they seem to be useless. How can we expect God to change these laws for our good pleasure,—not once, but at every instant, throughout the world? Would not a favorable response to our prayers disturb at every moment the stability of order, existing in the physical and moral world? Would not science be an impossibility, based, as it is, on fixed and uniform laws?

Of what use, for instance, were the prayers of Moses for Josue and the Israelites, when they fought against the Amalecites? Of what benefit were the prayers of the primitive Christians for Peter's deliverance from prison?[2] Would not these events have turned out precisely as they did, whether Moses and the first Christians had prayed or not?

Of what use were Samuel's prayers for thunder and rain?[3] Of what avail were the prayers of St. Paul for the safety of the passengers during a storm in the Mediterranean?[4] Was it any advantage to Ezechias to pray for the recovery of his health?[5] The wishes of the suppliants were all fulfilled, it is true; but were the results due to their prayers? Are not rain and storms and fevers controlled by fixed and immovable laws? And how can Providence interpose, in answer to our prayers, to alter or modify those laws which His wisdom has framed? In a word, is it not vain to ask of God grace to avoid sin, since our salvation or condemnation is already determined in the eternal decrees of God?

Answer: The efficacy of prayer does not infringe on the eternal decrees of God, and is entirely compatible with the immutability of His laws. I will quote the lucid exposition of St. Thomas on the subject: "In proclaiming," he says, "the utility of prayer, we are not to be understood as putting any restraint on human acts, subject to Divine Providence, nor are we supposing any change in the ordinances of God. Divine Providence has determined in advance, not only the effects which are to be produced, but also

[1] Malach. iii. 14. [2] Acts xii. 5. [3] I. Kings xii. 18.
[4] Acts xxvii. [5] IV. Kings xx. 1–6.

their order, and the causes which are to produce them. Among these causes are included human acts. These acts are not intended to change the arrangement of God, but to concur in producing certain effects in accordance with the divine dispensation. Just as it is with regard to physical causes, so is it, too, with regard to prayer. The aim of prayer is not to alter the designs of God, but to ask that they be accomplished by our prayers. In the words of St. Gregory: 'Man prays that he may merit to obtain from the Almighty what He has decreed from all eternity to grant.'"[1]

This explanation strikes at the root of the objection. It shows that prayer is efficacious without disturbing, for a moment, the order existing in the world; that God has no after-thoughts; that He is never surprised by our petitions, and never compelled to review or correct our account in the Book of Life. The dawn of creation, the present moment, and the day of judgment, are all simultaneous with God. Though in point of execution, my prayer is posterior to God's absolute decrees, yet before God it is anterior to them.

They who invoke the immutability of God's universal laws, lose sight of the great law of prayer itself. They forget that prayer holds a conspicuous place in the harmony of creation. They forget that it is a powerful leaven in shaping and moulding the mass of human actions, and an essential element and factor in framing His eternal decrees. As well might we suppose that the Signal Service Corps would leave out the winds in calculating the state of the weather, as that God would take no note of the spirit of prayer in determining our moral condition, and our future destiny.

Euler, the famous mathematician, expresses himself lucidly on this point: "Religion," he says, "prescribes to us the duty of prayer, in giving us the assurance that God will listen to our supplications, provided they are conformable to the rules which He has laid down for us. Philosophy, on the other hand, teaches us that all the events of life happen in accordance with the course of nature established from the beginning, and that nothing can happen which has not been foreseen and decreed. But, I answer, that, when God established the course of nature, and arranged all the events that were to occur, He evidently had regard to all the circumstances which accompanied each event, and particularly to the dispositions and prayers of each intelligent being, and that the arrangement of every event has been placed in perfect accord with all these circumstances. When a Christian, therefore, addresses to God a prayer worthy of being heard, it must not be imagined that this prayer has just come to the knowledge of God. He has al-

[1] Summa Theol. II^a. II^ae. Quæst. LXXXIII.

ready heard it from all eternity, and if, as a compassionate Father, He has judged it worthy of being granted, He has arranged the world expressly in favor of this prayer, so that its accomplishment might be the succession of the regular course of events."[1]

Let us now apply these principles to the special objections which I have adduced. From all eternity, God decreed that Josue and his hosts should conquer the Amalecites in answer to the prayer of his servant Moses, and that Peter should be rescued from prison in response to the prayer of the first Christians. The petitions of the Jewish Lawgiver and of the early Christians, were a potent element in deciding the earthly career of the Hebrew people and the Prince of the Apostles. From all eternity, God decreed to send rain in answer to Samuel, to rescue the passengers in view of the prayer and merits of St. Paul, and to prolong the life of Ezechias in compliance with his petition.

Hence, we see the fallacy of Mr. Tyndall's assertion that science regards a prayer for rain as involving a miracle just as much as a prayer for water to run up-hill;[2] for, should we ask for a stream to run up-hill, we would beg for a phenomenon clearly contrary to nature's laws; but when we pray for rain, we ask for an atmospheric change which is habitually occurring throughout the world without any disturbance of the established laws of nature.

But, if the laws of nature are immutable, are they emancipated from divine control? Does God allow them to run their course blindly, like the vessel which is launched at the river's source, and which rushes headlong without a pilot? By no means. It should be borne in mind, as Mr. Ward observes, that, though "it is true, on the one hand, that the laws of external nature are strictly invariable (waiving the case of miracles, which are not here discussed), it is equally true, on the other hand, that those laws are premoved and directed by God at every moment, according to the dictates of His uncontrolled and inscrutable will."[3] God is not self-excluded from interference in the movements of His own works. He has not surrendered the reins of government in the moral and physical world. His knowledge, power, and influence are all-pervading. *He is behind the veil of nature, working always.* When God wished to chastise Egypt, He caused a burning wind to blow for a whole day and night. The next morning the wind spread the locusts over all Egypt, and He then made a very strong westerly wind to blow, which cast the locusts into the Red Sea.[4] Here we have a series of inanimate and irrational creatures, acting in phenomenal sequence, following the law of their nature, but directed to a specific purpose by a supreme, intelligent Being.

[1] Lettres à une Princesse d'Allemagne.
[2] "Fragments of Science," p. 39.
[3] "Dublin Review," 1867.
[4] Exod. x. 13–19.

How true are the words of the Prophet: "The Lord's ways are in a tempest, and a whirlwind, and clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebuketh the sea, and drieth it up; and bringeth all the rivers to be a desert. Basan languisheth and Carmel, and the flower of Libanus fadeth away. The mountains tremble at Him, and the hills are made desolate; and the earth hath quaked at His presence."[1] Yes, He is behind the veil of nature, working always!

3d. But does not prayer paralyze human energy and encourage indolence, by resigning everything to God and neglecting the natural means of safety? Lord Palmerston is reported to have put this objection in a terse and plausible form, in reply to a delegation that asked him to recommend a day of public prayer and fasting, to avert the cholera: "Gentlemen," he said, "never mind prayer and fasting, but cleanse your drains."

This objection is more specious than solid. It supposes, what is not true, that natural remedies are to be disregarded, because supernatural aid is invoked. The advocates of prayer teach that every human means is to be resorted to, that all the appliances of science and the rules of prudence are to be employed to avert calamities, for, "God helps those that help themselves."

There are four ways in which the deputation referred to might be answered. 1st. An unbelieving scientist would reply with Palmerston: "Cleanse your drains, let prayer alone." 2d. A superstitious Christian (if such is to be found) would say: "Never mind the drains, but attend to your prayers." 3d. A fatalist would advise the deputation to do nothing at all, as, do what they would, their fate was sealed. 4th. A Christian philosopher would enjoin, as St. Charles Borromeo did during the plague of Milan, that prayers be offered up to God, but he would, also, direct that the drains be cleansed and the doctors consulted; for he knows that God ordinarily works His wonders through the established laws of nature, and it is not His will that the laws of hygiene and the science of medicine should be disregarded.

Lord Palmerston was right in advising that the drains be cleansed; but he was wrong in discouraging the invocation of the Deity, since prayer enters largely into the divine economy. The superstitious Christian would be doing right in counselling supplications to the Divinity, but in discouraging natural remedies he would be tempting God. The fatalist, in rejecting both human and divine assistance, pursues a course condemned alike by reason and revelation. The Christian philosopher, in enjoining prayer *and* the remedies approved by science, acts in accordance with sound sense and the ordinances of God.

---

[1] Nahum i. 3–5.

4th. But, perhaps, you will say with Rousseau :[1] "I commune, indeed, with God; I adore Him; I am sensibly touched by His benefits; I bless Him for His gifts; but why should I petition Him?" In representing my wants to God, would I not be calling in question His infinite knowledge and insulting His uncreated wisdom? Do I pretend to enlighten Him of whom our Saviour says: "Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things?"[2]

Our object in petitioning God is not, of course, to enlighten Him in regard to our condition, but to manifest our filial piety towards Him and our entire dependence on Him, and to acknowledge Him as the Author of every good gift. The obligation to implore God's mercy, is quite as imperative as the duty of worshipping and thanking Him. Experience shows that those who never ask favors of God, seldom bless Him, or give Him thanks, and often end by forgetting their Benefactor, if they do not even go so far as to deny His Providence altogether.

The practice of supplicating God fosters a spirit of devotion, filial gratitude, humility, and dependence, and keeps alive those hallowed relations which, as loving children, we ought to maintain with our Eternal Father. O say not, then, that prayer is a mark of spiritual bondage! On the contrary, the more frequently we commune with God in prayer, the more we exercise our glorious prerogative as children of God; for, surely, the children enjoy more familiar intercourse with the father of the family than do the servants of the household. Wretched, indeed, would be those children who would live under their parents' roof, without ever holding any conversation with them!—and tenfold more wretched are they who abstain from all communion with their Heavenly Father!

Our purpose in laying our wants before God, is not to excite His benevolence, which needs no incentive, but to discharge a duty, to fulfil the law of prayer, and to comply with a condition to which He has annexed some of His gifts.

There are, indeed, some blessings which the Divine Bounty bestows upon all without being solicited; for, He "maketh His sun to rise on the good and the bad, and raineth on the just and the unjust." But there are, also, many favors which are attached to prayer; for our Saviour says: "*Ask* and it shall be given you: *seek* and you shall find: *knock* and it shall be opened," evidently implying that there are certain gifts which we shall not receive, if we do not ask for them.

When our Lord says: "Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things," His aim is certainly not to dissuade us from asking of God (for, in the same discourse, He is encouraging

[1] Profession de foi du vicaire Savoyard. [2] Matt. vi. 32.

prayer), but to inspire us with unbounded confidence in Divine Providence.

5th. Supplication, I now admit, forms an integral and essential element of divine worship. But, as "we know not what we should pray for as we ought,"[1] is it not sufficient to make our petition in general terms, or are we enjoined to descend to particulars?

Most assuredly: for the duty of prayer is prompted by a sense of our wants. But who is concerned about his general wants? It is our daily and particular necessities that excite our solicitude, and, taught by our Master, we ask "this day our daily bread." Hence, if we habitually restricted ourselves to vague petitions, we would soon cease to pray at all. As the bond of domestic union and friendship is maintained, not by indefinite sentiments of benevolence, but rather by specific acts, so is our devotion to our Heavenly Father quickened and fostered by asking Him for daily needs. And, although we know not of ourselves what is expedient to ask, "the Spirit (of God) helpeth our infirmity" by inspiring us with holy desires.

6th. Again, it will be objected, perhaps, that many persons have been justified in giving up the practice of prayer, because they have often failed to obtain the particular object of their petition. A Maryland physician informed me that, in the course of one of his professional visits, he expressed to the mother of the family the hope that God would spare the life of her sick child. "I have never," she replied, "bent my knee in prayer for the last two years, when I lost my other child, for whose recovery I earnestly, but vainly prayed."

And did not the death of the late President Garfield, notwithstanding the prayers that were offered for his recovery, tempt many persons to doubt the efficacy of prayer? Did they not say in their heart, as a certain lady said to myself: "I have prayed for the life of the President, and prayed in vain. My family prayed for him; our congregation prayed for him; the city of Baltimore prayed for him; the State prayed for him; the nation prayed for him, and prayed in vain. How can you reconcile the futility of the nation's appeal to heaven with the promise of our Saviour when He says: 'If you shall ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you.'"[2]

Having put the objection as strongly as possible, I answer, nevertheless, that the words of our Saviour are most true, and are to be received with unshaken faith. No good prayer ever goes unanswered. If a single drop of water, or breath of air is never anni-

[1] Rom. viii. 26. [2] John xvi. 23.

hilated, still less is the faintest aspiration of prayer uttered in vain that ascends from a fervent heart to the throne of grace.

And now, in reply to your difficulty, I affirm that God answers our prayers in one of two ways, either directly or indirectly. Sometimes He grants us the direct and specified object of our petitions; sometimes He denies us what we particularly ask for, but He grants us something equivalent to, or even better than that for which we seek. Just as a prudent father withholds from his child a dangerous toy, and bestows on him, instead, something harmless and useful, so our Heavenly Father gives what to Him seems best, and our wisdom is but folly compared with the infinite wisdom of God.

First. In regard to the President: If God, in response to our prayers, did not save his life, He has done more,—He has saved the life and preserved the peace of the nation, and the life of the nation is of more value than the life of any individual.

Secondly. He was pleased to prolong the President's life for nearly three months after he had received the fatal wound. Had he died immediately from the wound, what terrible consequences might have ensued! So intense at the moment was public feeling; so strong (though most unjust) was the suspicion aroused against the leaders of a certain political party; so bitter was the animosity engendered by those suspicions, that, if the President had immediately succumbed, it would have needed but a spark to ignite the flame. The first assassination might have been followed by others, and anarchy and confusion and sedition might, for a time, have reigned supreme.

But God mercifully prolonged his life till the excitement subsided, when cool reason could regain her throne, and men could plainly see that the crime was the work of one man alone, having no collusion with others.

Thirdly. As another fruit of our prayers, God inspired the country with a more intense abhorrence of assassination, and a greater reverence for the Chief Magistrate of the nation.

Fourthly. As another result of our prayers, during the trying ordeal through which we were passing, party spirit yielded to the nobler and healthier sentiment of patriotism and love of country. Men forgot, for the time being, that they were Stalwarts or Conservatives, Republicans or Democrats, Administration or Anti-Administration partisans. They remembered only that they were Americans and citizens of a common country, children of the same mother, and they came together to shed a tear of sorrow by the sick-bed of their ruling brother.

Is not this a satisfactory answer to your difficulty? Did not God hearken to our petitions by sparing the life and saving the peace of

the Republic, by prolonging the President's life till public feeling was quieted, and by inspiring men with a greater abhorrence of the crime of assassination and a deeper love for our country and its institutions? And have not our prayers been profitable, also, in another sense? Have they not been an eloquent rebuke to atheism and infidelity, and a solemn and national profession of faith in God's existence, in His power and wisdom, and in His superintending Providence? Let us remember that the chief object of prayer is not to ask and receive favors from God—that would be a narrow and selfish consideration. God forbid that He should always grant us according to the desires of our heart! This would be abandoning us to our own folly, and the withdrawal of His Providence from us, as happened to the Jews when they importuned God for a king. We are always safe in leaving the result of our prayers to His discretion. The primary motive of prayer is to acknowledge our filial dependence on God and His Fatherly care of us.

Hence, we may judge how inconclusive and revolting to our religious instincts was the prayer-test of Mr. Tyndall, who proposed that the virtue of prayer should be tried by placing in two different wards an equal number of patients, afflicted in the same degree with similar maladies, and that the inmates of one ward should pray for their recovery, while those in the other should make no appeal to heaven.

Besides tempting God, the chief fault of the prayer-test lies in the false assumption that prayer is useless, unless the express object of the petition is granted. For my part, while protesting against the blasphemy involved in doubting the efficacy of prayer for temporal blessings, I would infinitely prefer to be a patient in the praying ward through a painful and lingering illness, if even death itself were to follow, than to be an indevout patient in the other ward, though I were to be restored to health. For I would be placing myself in the loving arms of my Father: "Although He should kill me, I will trust in Him."[1] I would expire in the blessed assurance that His mercy would follow me beyond the grave. Immeasurably sweeter to me would be the spiritual consolation, the blissful hope, the solid peace, and the friendship of my Heavenly Father, than the possession of a healthy frame, animated by a soul without God in this world, or the hope of Him in the life to come.

7th. But I may be met here at the end of the discussion by a more subtle objection. I have prayed, you will say, for a spiritual blessing,—the conversion of a friend or relative, or the moral reformation of a wayward son, and my prayer seems to have been thrown away. For what more legitimate blessing could I ask?

[1] Job xiii. 15.

I answer, in the first place, that you will very probably obtain the object of your petition, if you pray with perseverance. It was only after sixteen years of earnest entreaty that Monica obtained the conversion of her cherished son Augustine. It was only after persistent solicitations that the Canaanite woman procured the recovery of her daughter's health;[1] and St. Francis de Sales obtained the mastery over his temper only after a prayerful struggle of twenty years.

Secondly. But, perhaps, your friend for whom you constantly prayed, died without manifesting any certain signs of grace and repentance. Be it so! Did God make manifest to you the condition of your friend's soul at the moment of his demise? He may have sanctified that soul by a sudden ray of grace in the moment of dissolution, and concealed from you, for your present humiliation, the blissful fruit of your entreaties, that your joy may be full on the day of the Lord. He may, also, have concealed the conversion of your friend from all who knew him, that they might fully realize the necessity of an early conversion to their Creator, and of securing a happy death by a holy life. Even at the last moment, there is, indeed, hope of salvation; but, then, true conversion of heart after a long life of neglected duties, requires a miracle of grace. Of the conversion of the good thief, St. Augustine says: "One was converted at the hour of death, that you might not despair; *only* one was converted, that you might not presume." God's unrevealed mercies are over all His works. Who would have imagined the salvation of the dying thief, if the Evangelist had not recorded the expiring words of our Saviour: "This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise!"[2]

But, lastly, even admitting that your friend gave manifest evidence of final impenitence and died with a blasphemy on his lips—what then? God compels no man to accept His proffered mercy, neither can your prayers force any one to surrender his will to the influence of divine grace. Nevertheless, your prayer was not offered in vain. If the heavenly waters find no lodgment in his stony heart, they will flow back abundantly into the valley of your own soul, and the words of the Psalmist will be fulfilled in you: "My prayer shall be turned into my bosom."[3]

---

[1] Matt. xv. 22–28. [2] Luke xxiii. 43. [3] Ps. xxxiv. 13.

WILLIAM M. THACKERAY.

Thackeray; the Humorist, and the Man of Letters. The Story of his Life, including a Selection from his Speeches. T. Taylor. London, 1864.

English Men of Letters; Thackeray. Anthony Trollope. New York, 1879.

A COMMON outcry among the disciples of what may be termed the school of extremists in modern culture, is, that the mind of the age is no longer productive, but reflective; no longer original, but critical. In the humble judgment of another class, however, there is a vast deal of solid comfort in certain indications which seem to carry proof of the assertion. When one realizes the amount of so-called literature launched every year upon the public attention, and recollects how small a part, comparatively speaking, will have even transient recognition, still less a lasting place in men's regard, it becomes a matter of congratulation that a check is somehow being laid upon such over-supply. Not only is it true of the recurrent sameness of the modern novel, the unending records of travel, the maunderings of infidel theorists, or the speculations of scientific inquiry, whether of the genuinely earnest or of the self-seeking charlatan. There is another class of writing, which arrogates to itself a large space and claims a sort of pre-eminence by right of artistic excellence heretofore unattained, with which we are in danger of being surfeited. A member of this fraternity not long since informed the world that "the art of fiction has become a finer art in our day than it was with Dickens and Thackeray. We could not suffer the confidential attitude of the latter now, nor the mannerism of the former, any more than we could endure the prolixity of Richardson, or the coarseness of Fielding." Leaving out of sight the merits of these last, as painters of their own times, and emphasizing their faults, this fastidious critic couples them, in one flourish of his pen, with the two names in all the world of letters which most completely overthrow his assertion. To talk of having improved upon the art which gave us David Copperfield and Vanity Fair, while the sight of the authors' living faces is fresh in our remembrance, and the sound of their voices yet lingering in our ears, is almost too much for ordinary patience. Besides the insufferable presumption of the thing, there is a surprising inconsistency in such an assertion, as

applied to Thackeray, the undisputed master of style, by one of the class whose leading tenet seems to be the entire subordination of matter to manner. Form is everything, substance an unconsidered trifle. The most ordinary incident, or commonplace sentiment, is so dwelt upon in well-chosen and polished words that the mind unconsciously begins to feel itself somehow enriched and elevated, until the moment of afterthought, when the charm of diction has a little faded, brings out the prosaic fact that the seeming gem was, after all, but a pebble. The world is quite able as yet to dispense with such "improvement," and content to feed upon the fruits of an older tillage, rather than grasp originality at the price of being so nearly inane.

The period of Thackeray's advent in the world of English letters was one of marked activity in every department of thought. Philosophy, metaphysics, political enlightenment, the long-impending reaction in poetry, each had begun to bear part in a new era. The generation that was passing away had left its indelible impress upon the times. The oracular utterances of Coleridge, the quaint humor of Lamb, the subtle criticism of Hazlitt, the recondite studies of Southey, and the love of external nature awakened by the poetry of Wordsworth, had widened the scope of the literary thought of England, and on the foundations laid by these master-builders new edifices were being erected by younger hands, while the wealth of a still earlier literature had not yet receded so far out of sight as to be practically obsolete. In the circumstances which led Thackeray into a literary life there were no rough nor specially painful experiences. He could in no wise lay claim to the distinction, so nobly won by Charles Dickens, of being self-made or self-educated. It can never be known whether or not he could have borne such a struggle or conquered such adverse fate as did his brilliant and gifted contemporary. Certain it is that he was never tried. By birth, inheritance, and training he was a gentleman, bred up from his earliest years with all the surroundings of comfort and refinement; an only child, possessed of a moderate, but ample fortune, and accustomed to the society of cultured people all his life. That he knew exactly the value of such advantages is as evident as that his estimate of character in others was not in the least dependent upon such knowledge. Judged by his books, which are the expressions of himself in a more literal sense than is usual with authors, we know of nothing more characteristic than the words of Thomas Newcome to his son, upon this point: "I think every man would like to come of an ancient and honorable race. As you like your father to be an honorable man, why not your grandfather, and his ancestors before him? But, if we can't inherit a good name, at least we can do our best

to leave one, my boy; and that is an ambition which, please God, you and I will both hold by."[1]

Sent home from India when a mere child, Thackeray's training in the school-life at Charterhouse was the substantial basis on which his whole future was moulded, and his loyal attachment to the old foundation is traceable in many of his finest touches. Every one will remember the allusions through the delightful pages of *The Newcomes* to the old Grayfriars, where, through a Gothic archway one catches now and then a glimpse of some black-gowned pensioner gliding across in the sunshine, his feeble step scarcely waking an echo from the pavement, while on the other side, close by the ancient buildings of the hospital, merry schoolboys shout and laugh and carry on their games, lighthearted and careless, as if sorrow and pain and disappointment were nowhere in the world. Thackeray sketches such scenes with an especial fondness, and in one of the simple talks between Clive Newcome and his father, he brings out the sort of influence which such a school life should exert upon a manly nature, the love of straightforward honesty, a hearty respect for goodness however homely, and a contempt for everything mean and pretentious and untrue. The boy's views of his own little world are essentially boyish, but they speak a kindly heart as well as a shrewdly observant eye. Supplemented by the gentle charity of the good old Colonel, they form an outline from which may be readily filled up the presentment of the author himself, with the candor, sincerity, and human sympathy which he strove to inculcate in all he wrote, however he may have been wilfully or blindly misunderstood.

There is no evidence of any striking mental precocity in these youthful days, his career at Charterhouse having been highly creditable but with nothing remarkable about it, if we except an unusually rapid rise in the school. Thence he went to Cambridge, and spent seven or eight terms within its classic precincts, making for himself a fair record, and forming valuable friendships, which, in some instances, lasted to the end, notably that with Tennyson, for whom he had the warmest admiration as man and as poet. Another less intimate companion was the great Anglo-Saxon scholar, John Mitchell Kemble, who became as famous in his way as his two fellow-students in their respective spheres. He left Trinity, however, long before Thackeray, and went to Germany in order to devote himself to the study of ancient dialects. A few years later he became known as one of the profoundest of modern scholars in Saxon philology and antiquities. A host of lesser lights, as regards distinction in literature and science, but including names honored in various paths of private life, were among

[1] The Newcomes, chap. vii.

the comrades of those college days, and Thackeray's earliest essays in practical fun were under the influence of such companionship. A poem by Tennyson, which won the Cambridge prize, was the subject of Thackeray's first travesty, and the two productions singularly foreshadow the intellectual future of the boyish authors. A sort of leadership appears to have been, by common consent, assigned to the young satirist, and the editorship of the college journal, *The Snob*, fell by natural selection into his hands. The greater number of the sketches bear unmistakable traces of his pen, and the communications of Dorothea Julia Ramsbottom have a clearly-defined resemblance to the marvellous orthographic feats achieved long afterwards by Jeames Yellowplush.

Thackeray manifested no marked fondness for the Greek classics, at least his writings bear little evidence of it, but he was an elegant Latinist, and delighted especially in Horatian wit, whose pungency, tempered by his own delicate fancy, gives flavor to numberless passages throughout his works. His life at Trinity must have been one of genuine enjoyment, without much reference to the gravities and responsibilities of the future, and, whether from indifference to college honors or indolence as to effort, he did not attempt to attain them, but left at his own pleasure when not yet nineteen years old. With a party of English youths, numbering about a score, we find him shortly after at Weimar, where, with letters to the right people, they were soon received at the charming little court, and fully entered upon a new and singularly agreeable phase of life, as Thackeray says of himself, "for study, or sport, or society." The late Mr. George H. Lewes mentions Thackeray's habit of making droll impromptu sketches in Weimar albums, which are still displayed with pride as the work of the genial young Englishman, and that they were even honored by the amused notice of Goethe, to the immense gratification of the youthful artist. A letter to Mr. Lewes,[1] written in 1855, describes the routine upon which the collegians were launched, in terms which, with all allowance for the glamour cast by the five-and-twenty years intervening, present one of the pleasantest of pictures. He tells of the invention of gorgeous costumes, and the wearing of uniforms, military or diplomatic, by such of them as could contrive a reasonable pretext for such splendor, of their being carried in sedan chairs to court balls on snowy nights, of the charming ladies who spoke such admirable English as to preclude the young Englishmen from improving their German, and of the unvarying kindness and courtesy of the Grand Duke and Duchess. The odd mingling of stately etiquette and homely simplicity in the little court is delightfully sketched,

[1] This charming letter is given by Mr. Lewes in the first edition of his Life of Goethe, which appeared in London in December, 1863.

and he speaks of the continual meetings at dinners, assemblies, and theatre, as of a large family party. The greatest honor was paid to Goethe, who, although withdrawn from active life, was yet interested in all that happened around him, and received strangers in semi-royal fashion. His influence in dramatic affairs had not yet passed away, and no finer theatrical performances could be witnessed in all Germany than those given in the theatre which had been so long under his direction. The bright particular stars in that winter of 1831 were Ludwig Devrient, who played *Hamlet*, *Falstaff*, *Shylock*, and other widely differing rôles, with wonderful power, and Madame Schroeder Devrient, whose marvellous voice and acting in *Fidelio* have become traditional.

Thackeray gives an amusing account of the perturbation of mind with which he prepared for the honor of an interview with the Herr Geheimrath, his boyish embarrassment on finding himself in Goethe's presence, and the sense of relief that came to him with the discovery that the great man did not speak French so well as himself. . . . . .

The habits of observation and reflection, which were to bear fruit in after years, found large scope among these Weimar associations, and the pictures of Continental life and customs, drawn with such skill in his books, owe much of their force and truth to actual experiences. A few lines of his own, in reference to this period, are characteristic of the man as to his whole-hearted appreciation of what may be termed the commonplace virtues of mankind. "With a five-and-twenty years' experience since those happy days, ... and an acquaintance with an immense variety of the human kind, I think I have never seen a society more simple, charitable, courteous, and gentlemanlike than that of the dear little Saxon city, where the good Schiller and the great Goethe lived, and lie buried." Goodness of the poet whom he never saw comes first in his thought before even the greatness for which he had such profound admiration. A sword, which had been Schiller's, became one of his most valued possessions, and always hung upon his study-wall, a memento of "days the most kindly and delightful." One is tempted to dwell somewhat upon this period as one of largely formative influence in Thackeray's life. His natural bent was artistic rather than literary, and with that touch of Bohemianism which gave an added sweetness to his frank and kindly nature, and which was never quite eradicated, he was always seeking out delightedly everything characteristic in the quaintness and novelty of his surroundings. Studying the inner life from the outward seeming, he learned to separate reality from assumed disguise, to distinguish false from true, and became a painter indeed, not of face and form, but of mind and motive. Like many another, he seems to have been unaware

of his real power in early life, and, if he looked forward to anything as a profession, it was certainly to art, and not to literature, that he was most strongly attracted. His admiration of Paris as a centre of artistic and social brilliancy was very great. He often spoke of it as the Paradise of painters, and was frequently tempted thither by the galleries so freely opened to students, and by the presence of valued friends. An anecdote is told of his having once, in his boyhood, taken a stolen trip, which was successfully concealed from the authorities, at the cost of a fib told to his tutor, who was given to understand that the time of absence was to be spent in Lincolnshire. Years afterwards, when fame had come to him, this act of wrong-doing was still unforgotten, and he sought out his old preceptor in order to confess the matter to him, adding in his emphatic way, "Guilt, sir, guilt always remained stamped on the memory, and I feel easier in my mind, now that it is liberated of this old peccadillo." His fondness for Paris, however, did not imply in his case a love for the French as a people. He had an Englishman's prejudices, and he clearly saw the evil features of certain phases of life among the higher classes. He was severe upon their political weaknesses, too, no less than upon the peculiar literary taste, which found expression in the works of Sue and George Sand, and his horror of its influence, as of Atheism, in any form or tendency, was unbounded.[1] Yet, all the same, he recognized and loved the goodness and purity which he found to outweigh the evil, and the intellectual strength, which has achieved so much for human progress; while he sincerely honored the simplicity of earnest hearts who held intact through all the evils of the time the old faith, which differed from his own. Some of his papers on "Art and Artists," sent to various periodicals at home, during his residence in Paris, after quitting Weimar, give a foretaste of the charm of his later works, when life had taught him lessons as yet unlearned. His first acquaintance with Rome dates from this period, and he drank to the full of her wonderful inspiration. His heart seems to swell with a boundless enthusiasm, whenever he speaks of the Eternal City, and no finer descriptions of it are to be found in the English tongue than his own.

Within a comparatively recent period there has been a marked

[1] As evidence of Thackeray's abhorrence of that school of wickedness, we recall the following passage, in which his very soul seems stirred by the blasphemous daring of some of its leaders:

"O awful, awful Name of God! Light unbearable! Mystery unfathomable! Vastness immeasurable! Who are these who come forward to explain the mystery, and gaze unblinking into the depths of the light, and measure the immeasurable vastness to a hair? O Name that God's people of old did fear to utter! O light that God's prophet would have perished, had he seen! Who are these, now so familiar with it?"—*Madame Sand and the New Apocalypse.*

change in the popular estimate of Thackeray. It might almost be said that at one time a sort of proprietary right in his works was tacitly assigned to the scholarly or distinctly critical element of society, as compared with that far larger class possessed of average intelligence and cultivation. It was rare to find any degree of enthusiasm awakened by the mention of his books, and the ordinary mind was content with an opinion at second hand, or still more remotely derived, that he was a writer whose views of life could do nobody any good, whose aim was to make the world appear a very poor place, indeed, and whose principal claim to be read at all lay in the classic elegance of his style. Such ideas, however, in the nature of things could not long prevail, and his recognition as a master of English fiction, and as one of the most delightful of writers, was a foregone conclusion. In nothing, perhaps, is his many-sidedness more plainly proved than in the various kinds of criticism called forth by his works, and his life, that is to say, the little that is known of his life. The leading periodicals of the day, one and all, have something to say about him, from time to time, which generally speaking is worth saying, even though certain of the writers occasionally fall into grievous error through misunderstanding the man upon whom they are passing judgment. The most extended account of him in his private relations, as well as in his literary career, which has yet been given us, is the Life, by the late Anthony Trollope. Himself a polished and facile writer, familiar with books and bookmakers, associated for some time with Thackeray in connection with the *Cornhill Magazine*, it would seem that no more fitting choice of a biographer could have been made. Yet the work has greatly disappointed those who looked to it as a means to the final estimate of Thackeray, the man and the author. There is a half-hearted sound even in its praise, an air of constraint in its utmost cordiality, which perforce suggests a book written to order, and when, now and then, a passage occurs in the old pleasant vein of Trollope's usual style, it only serves to deepen one's regret that such passages are so rare. But when one remembers how soon after these pages were finished the illness which was to close that busy life began, the harshness of fault-finding softens into sorrowful sympathy at thought of that failing of mind and body which had been stealthily creeping on for a long time unsuspected. While the book gives credit to the tenderness of Thackeray's nature, the generosity which nearly approached excess, the kindness and overflowing charity continually manifested in his daily life, yet the impression left upon the mind is one of dissatisfaction; there is a lack of reality, a sense of something superficial in the delineation as a whole. The reader perceives that Mr. Trollope, in the fear of being too laudatory, has been led to

insist upon certain peculiarities of temperament, until they stand out as grave faults instead of the trifles they really are. Again, while giving an accurate and splendid synopsis of a range of work which would make a creditable showing as the result of double the number of years actually spent upon it, he dwells strongly upon the lack of energy, of promptness, and of systematic labor, displayed by Thackeray. The story, as Mr. Trollope tells it, is not simply a statement of facts, which leaves the reader to form his own conclusions as to the character they might serve to illustrate, but is everywhere interspersed with comments, largely hypothetical. He fancies, doubts, and supposes, in regard to the condition of Thackeray's mind, or the design of this or that portion of his work, to the verge of tedium. At one moment it is said that "he was from an early age fully conscious of his own ability;" and within two pages there is found such a passage as this: "There is a touch of vagueness which indicates that his pen was not firm while he was using it. He seems to me to have been dreaming ever of some high flight, and then to have told himself with a half-broken heart that it was beyond his power to soar into those bright regions. I can fancy, as the sheets went from him every day, he told himself in regard to every sheet that it was a failure."[1] It is hard to conceive how any reader of Thackeray could consider vagueness to be a feature of his style. If any writer of modern times can be cited as setting before him a definite purpose, and carrying out that purpose with steadfast determination, in language as clear as his hand is firm, that writer would seem to be he. A manly confidence in his own power is as plainly evident as is his genius itself, and it would have required a courage almost superhuman to persevere as he did, through years of labor like his, if a sense of failure had been upon every page he wrote. It is a truism to say of every genuine artist, whether painter, sculptor, or poet, that the realization is always short of the ideal, as an inevitable condition of mundane limitation, but this is not what one means by the word failure.

Had Thackeray accomplished but a moiety of what he did, his name would have been deservedly held in honor as one of the strongest no less than one of the purest writers who ever laid bare the mysteries of the human heart, as well as one of the most truthful, generous, and kindly of censors. It may be said without fear of contradiction that any one of his mature works would have sufficed to stamp him as great in the world of letters. Whether he leads us through the mazes of *Vanity Fair*, perhaps the most finished in detail of anything he wrote, or shows us that profound study of thought and motive in what some one has called

[1] Trollope's Thackeray, p. 19.

the saddest of his books, *Pendennis;* whether he traces the fortunes of *The Newcomes*, painting with caressing hand that immortal figure of the Colonel, with Clive and Ethel, the gentle J. J., and angelic Madame de Florac, or pointing out the friends and foes, the joys and sorrows of Philip in his *Adventures;* everywhere and always there is visible the hand of the master, compelling the acknowledgment of its power. He elaborates nothing, he never dwells too much upon one fact or scene, whether droll or sorrowful, realistic or fanciful; he sketches with unerring touch and ready grace, and a sort of superb reliance upon the certainty of the effect. His pathos is inexpressibly delicate and touching, but he seems afraid to trust himself too long upon such ground, and turns away with a quick movement as if to hide his melting mood. It was so too in the events of every day. His eyes would moisten and his lip tremble at some moving story, and then he would burst out with some expletive by way of hiding his emotion, at the same moment that his hand would instinctively find its way to his pocket for the wherewithal to relieve the need described. An incident somewhat in point is but one among many known to that inner circle which comprised his chosen friends, and beyond which very little of his benevolence ever transpired during his life. A gentleman, greatly pressed in business affairs, was required to raise at very short notice a large sum of money, and without it would be inevitably ruined. He was by no means an intimate of Thackeray's, but well known to him and to a friend of his, who, meeting him by chance one day, mentioned the matter. "Do you mean to say that I am to find £2000?" exclaimed Thackeray, adding some angry words of rather a strong nature. His informant disclaimed having entertained the thought of suggesting such a thing. As he spoke an odd look came upon the face of his hearer, and in a hesitating tone, as if ashamed of the smallness of his offer, he half whispered: "I'll go half, if anybody will do the rest."[1] Such stories might be multiplied very largely, but it is not needed. He went about doing good out of the kindness of his great, tender heart, and with never a thought of gaining credit thereby. Love to his fellow-men was but another form of manifestation for the deep reverence for holy things which characterized him. The keen arrows of his satire were never aimed at sincere feeling, however grotesquely expressed. It was only towards that which seemed to him sham, pretence, or hypocrisy that his shafts were directed, and his personal faith was as simple and humble as a child's. One evening, when at Edinburgh, he was walking with two friends along a road which brought them in view of a portion of Corstorphine Hill. The

[1] Ibid., p. 59.

sunset was one of peculiar beauty, a crystalline clearness of atmosphere and unusual splendor of coloring making every object stand out in phenomenal delicacy of outline. At the summit of the hill a wooden crane, used in quarrying rock, was so placed as to present the figure of a cross. By a common impulse the three men stood still, gazing silently. Thackeray uttered a single word: "Calvary!" and then, as the light faded, the little group turned quietly away and passed on. It was remembered afterwards how serious and gentle he was all that evening, speaking, as he seldom did, of the life beyond and of things belonging to the soul's destiny.

He could not bear to hear a brother author unjustly attacked, his own sensitiveness making him keenly alive to the pain thereby inflicted. One of the strongest regrets of his life was that he had in early years cast ridicule upon the works of Bulwer, whom he heartily appreciated. Long subsequently he wrote: "There are two performances especially among the critical and biographical works of the erudite Mr. Yellowplush which I am very sorry to see reproduced, and I ask pardon of the author of *The Caxtons* for a lampoon, which I know he himself has forgiven, and which I wish I could recall. I had never seen that eminent writer but once in public when this satire was penned, and wonder at the recklessness of the young man who could fancy such personality was harmless jocularity, and never calculated that it might give pain."

The particular form in which the literary genius of Thackeray found expression may be characterized as reactionary. It was the natural protest of his downright and truth-loving spirit against the sentimental exaggeration of the romantic school, which, once passed out of the magic sway of Scott, was fast degenerating in the hands of less gifted adherents into feebleness if not actual absurdity. Impossible situations and equally impossible heroes, unreal views of life, ideal heroines, as airy and unsubstantial as the robes of white muslin in which they habitually arrayed themselves for all occasions however incongruous with the homespun facts of everyday, were intolerable to him on the same grounds which rendered snobbery and pretension and sham of every sort odious in his sight. His argument seems always to rest upon the bare facts in the case. He cannot reproduce what never to his consciousness has existed; he can only present things as he sees them.[1] He never deals in melodramatic effect, because melodrama is an element conspicuous by its absence in his knowledge of men and things. He paints no faultless creatures, never meeting such in his own experience; neither does he draw monsters of unre-

[1] The English Humorists, Charity and Humor, p. 210.

deemed blackness for the same reason. His work is, in short, realistic; he analyzes with subtle skill the motives and the minds of men, but his bad people are never wholly bad, any more than the opposite class are perfectly good. He recognizes the fact that every soul into which the breath of life has been breathed preserves some trace of its divine source, even in its deepest darkness, and his bitterest invective against wickedness, deceit, and crime is always suggestive of at least a possible return to better things. It is incredible that people of a high order of intelligence are to be found maintaining that Thackeray teaches an easy-going acceptance of the evil in the world. His whole work rings with a passionate cry for reform. He calls himself a preacher, and his teaching from beginning to end of every sermon is a paraphrase of the old text: "Pull out the mote that is in thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly." A kind moralist, he bids us examine into the recesses of our own hearts, not that we may be only shamed and grieved by what we find, but that we may judge our brother-man less hardly seeing how little we have to pride ourselves upon. And having shown us thus much, he leaves us with a generous confidence in the good within us to strive towards that higher plane his very blame has shown to be possible for us. What reader has ever risen from the study of one character in his books feeling that *seeming* could ever stand for *being?* What record among all the thronging figures of those matchless pages has ever made vice, or treachery, or selfishness in any of its forms other than detestable? Apart from the idle pleasantries of his youth, there is nothing in all that he ever wrote which does not tend to elevate and purify, to exalt what is good, and to teach scorn of the unworthy. The reaction brought about by such writers as himself has been widespread and unmistakable. From his first appearance among the brilliant circle of Fraser's the incisive clearness of his style commanded attention, even when his work was scarcely more than pastime, although bearing traces of the force which afterwards made him famous. But his hold upon the literary world was gained only by slow degrees. The new leaven was long working beneath the surface before its presence was recognized, but when the recognition came it was cordial, full, and lasting. With the appearance of *Vanity Fair* was ushered in a new school of fiction, in which real people lived and moved through a real world, and the day of sickly sentiment and transcendental affectation was over. The book itself he called a novel without a hero, but there are few stories in which such heroism of self-abnegation is to be found as in the character of Dobbin. True to his protest against the traditional high-born, high-bred, and polished ideal of such a personage, Thackeray seems to have gone

to the very limit of opposition in this creation. Having made him the son of a grocer, plain in person, awkward in manner, and totally unattractive at first sight, he yet contrives to invest him with a nobleness so far above the accident of station that his simple manliness stands out in the memory forever as a type of what is truest and best in human nature. Of Becky Sharp it is needless to speak at any length. If ever preacher taught effectually the evils of selfishness it has been done in this portraiture, and in her bad pre-eminence she is known to all the world. Immortal in infamy, there is yet a touch, here and there, which rouses something like sympathy, and the author himself does not always hate her. She is the direct and visible outcome of a social condition whose defects were ever present and ever hateful to him, and her character, never unnatural or overdrawn, is his unanswerable comment upon those defects. Amelia has been severely, and, it must be added, unjustly criticised as a weak, spiritless creature, too silly to be otherwise than good, and quite unworthy of her place in *Vanity Fair*. Women resent her as a sort of libel upon the feminine intellect, and cite her as evidence of Thackeray's contempt for the sex. The question here is, not whether all women are like Amelia, but is she a real representative of the class to which character, mind, and conduct, as drawn by the writer, would assign her? Undoubtedly the answer must be affirmative. She is not brilliant nor especially beautiful. She has no broad views of woman's sphere; she is childishly ignorant of public affairs; knows nothing of politics or statecraft, philosophy, or metaphysics, and so, in the advanced opinion of the day, is a most insignificant person. But she is versed in the lore of home and heart; she loves her parents, her friend, and afterwards her lover, with the sweetest, tenderest devotion; and when her father's fortunes change she accepts poverty and privation with a boundless patience, cares for those nearest to her with angelic goodness while they repay her with harsh injustice; loves and believes in her worthless husband in the face of reason and common sense as long as he lives, and mourns him dead with all her loyal soul through years of uncomplaining sorrow; and finally, when convinced by proof which even she can no longer combat of his unfaithfulness, turns to the true heart which has so long held her in its silent keeping, and marries Dobbin. Few men would feel ashamed of such a daughter, or be unwilling to see in her the womanliness, gentleness, and truthfulness of Amelia Sedley. It must be confessed that the baronet, Sir Pitt Crawley, is too strongly drawn to be altogether satisfactory. But it may serve the purpose of controverting an absurd and utterly unfounded assertion which has been lately made regarding the great novelist, that he had an undue es-

timate of rank and station. Judged by his own utterances, which form the best possible data for the purpose, since no author can be named who puts more of his own individuality into his books, there is no shadow of proof for such a charge. Yet certain writers of our own day have not hesitated to declare him subject to such weakness. Notable among these, one of our unfledged diplomats, a contributor to a leading magazine, has recently announced that this man, whose whole teaching, from first to last, has been on the side of virtue and truth and honor as the highest good, independent of all extraneous circumstance, had made himself unhappy because he never could by any possibility stand on a social level with the eldest son of a peer.[1] He also informs a benighted world that the mind of Thackeray was in some respects *turbid* and *confused*, through the influence of this abiding discontent. It is to be doubted if so surprising a discovery has had its intended effect of belittling that noble soul or even of impressing the reading public with the brilliant originality of its author, but it may give rise to a suggestion that such discontent in his own person may have made it possible for him to attribute it to one far above such pettiness. Thackeray's pen is rarely employed with either the virtues or vices of the titled classes, and when so employed it would seem to be with a marked impartiality. Sir Pitt is a baronet, but he is none the less a coarse brute; Major Dobbin is unqualifiedly plebeian, but one of the noblest of men. The Marquis of Farintosh is almost a fool, yet he is not altogether contemptible, and Lord Kew is as fine a young fellow as ever sowed his "wild oats" under the guiding hand of "society," and gathered his barren harvest, and began over again, with a manly repentance and an honest purpose to become the true-hearted gentleman nature meant him for. The Lord Steyne is as nearly satanic in blackness as the moralist could permit himself to paint him; and the Earl and Countess of Dorking calmly and cheerfully sell their fair young daughter to the rich purchaser who bid against poor Jack Belsize, whom she loved. Yet it was not because they were titled that Thackeray saw fit to pillory them, but because they were worldly and hard, false and selfish. He tells of the bishop in his lawn sleeves and his dignity, blessing the perjured pairs who have knelt before him with sacred words befitting only the truest, holiest union; and he sketches the smooth-tongued clergyman who, in gown and bands, stretches out white hands in benediction over his fashionable congregation, while his mean soul is filled only with thoughts of his own advantage. Yet no one imagines that the writer means to cast contempt upon the office which such things

1 "Thackeray's Relations to English Society," Scribner's Magazine, February, 1881.

desecrate. It was not class or condition at which he aimed his satire. It was at things wrong in and of themselves. He was a storyteller who used his story as a vehicle for his lesson, neither undervaluing the one nor overestimating the other.

And in the use of the wonderful power by which he holds his readers there is no stronger characteristic than his great suggestiveness. There are numberless names among writers of fiction whose constructive faculty surpasses his own, but there is not one who can by a touch, a hint, as it were, bring before us such a host of images. As in a kind of free-hand drawing, he presents to us the living personages of his tale, clear, vivid, real, winning our love or pity, our hatred or contempt, by force of their intense individualism. He fascinates, whether by attraction or repulsion, and we follow the fate of one and another with intensest interest, scarcely pausing to realize the skill of the delineation. And when the spell is removed by which he has held us, it is found that much more has been done by the artist than the portrayal of character. To name any one of his greater novels is to call to mind a presentation of the entire period in which the events are passing. When Barry Lyndon, that incomparable picture of a scoundrel delighting in his own wickedness, and in his own proper person speaking his delight, comes before us, he brings with him a perfect panorama of his day. Places, people, and events are present to the mind, filling a canvas far wider than the story itself, and the reader finds himself looking with a sense of actual acquaintanceship and familiarity upon the social life of those times in England and Ireland, or sharing the gay insouciant life of Continental scenes, breathing the same air, and thinking almost the same thoughts as the various groups around him.

In *Esmond* it has been asserted that Thackeray reached his highest point of artistic excellence in the arrangement of incident, the perfectly-preserved tone of the dialogue, and the development of the plot. It is in truth a marvellous creation, and in its perusal one realizes that only a mind imbued with the very spirit of the eighteenth century could have produced it, or that earlier work, which it strongly suggests, the *English Humorists*. The manner of the telling is indescribably charming, making the dry bones of history to be clothed upon with life, and its prosaic details to become absolute realities. The keen insight and almost pre-Raphaelite minuteness of analysis remind one of Balzac, but with a higher purpose and a purer pen. In *Esmond*, as in everything he wrote, this great-hearted preacher of morality repeats again his constant lesson in such witching fashion that the dullest learner must needs be in love with learning, and so delicately is it conveyed, so beautifully set in the heart of the story, as to be recognized rather by

inference than by plainer means. The hold which the book had upon his own mind may be judged by the fact that *The Virginians*, following it after an interval of several years, takes up the interests of some of the leading personages in *Esmond*. A friend once congratulating him upon the success it had achieved, he laughingly accepted the compliment, and observed, with that drollery which was part of him, "Yes, but after all, Esmond was a prig!" If Sidney Lanier's definition of the term be accepted as true, there is ample ground for the wish that such priggism might abound.[1]

The historical unity of the work is absolutely unbroken, and the treatment of the chief personages bold and strong, yet shaded as delicately as an etching. The incidental appearance among them of Harley and St. John, of Marlborough and his generals, with now and then a glimpse of certain features of royalty not usually displayed to the eyes of an admiring people, are so quietly and naturally managed that the keenest criticism can find no trace of incongruity. Henry Esmond himself is as noble a character as is to be found in literature, and Lady Castlewood, with all her faults, as perfect an artistic conception as if drawn by a Rubens or a Titian. Beatrix is a wonderfully successful presentation of a most difficult subject, and, fascinating as she is, it is so clearly an evil charm which she exerts that no one can be misled thereby. Her story is like a beacon-light, carrying far and wide its unmistakable warning. The vein of comedy cropping up here and there through the rather sombre coloring of the story, owes much of its richness to Dick the Scholar, or Captain Steele, as he preferred to call himself. The odd combination of good principles never put into practice, and noble views of life's duties, unsupported by the least endeavor to fulfil them, the indomitable cheerfulness, the generosity which would bestow his own and other men's money with gayest impartiality, the wit, simplicity, and kindness which won over the most disapproving observer, are so delightfully brought out that the reader is more than willing to cast the mantle of charity over the faults of a man who never quite ceased to be a child.

Addison too, whom Steele worshipped and raved over in his wild way, is a familiar companion of Esmond, and, since the latter has fought in Flanders, permits him to hear the lines of his famous poem, *The Campaign*, one day in his little room in the Haymarket, over a bottle of Burgundy sent by my Lord Halifax. A glittering courtier, all splendor and gold lace, enters and begs for the verses, which, being yielded to him, he bears away in vast excitement to the great people at court, and Mr. Addison's fortunes are made.

[1] The late Sidney Lanier somewhere described a prig as one whose goodness is so downright and uncompromising as to make the rest of us uncomfortable.

Yet one feels somehow that, in the grandeur that soon afterwards came to him, he was not much happier than when Esmond first knew him and admired the splendid courtesy and dignity of the man that made his shabby lodgings finer than many a castle, and his worn snuff-colored suit a lordly garb.

The character of Marlborough is one of the strongest features of the book, and may be regarded as one of the most masterly efforts of Thackeray's pen.[1] The action of the story is mingled with the highest glory as well as the downfall of the "greatest captain in the world," and the handling of the subject shows what the author might have achieved as a historian had he been so minded. A single sentence will serve to illustrate the concentrative force and fulness of his descriptive power. "He achieved the highest deed of daring or deepest calculation of thought as he performed the very meanest action of which a man is capable; told a lie, or cheated a fond woman, or robbed a poor beggar of a half-penny with a like awful serenity and equal capacity of the highest and lowest acts of our nature."[2]

The intrigues of the court, the jealousies of the great, the plans for bringing back the rightful sovereign to his throne, the plots and counter-plots of ambitious leaders are vividly presented, while the interest attaching to the private history of the Esmonds is never allowed to flag. Especially fine is the sketch of General Webb, commanding under Marlborough at Wynandael, and unjustly deprived of the honor due him on that occasion, through the favoritism of his chief. The account of the humiliation and final triumph of the old hero doubtless owes something of its excellence to a feeling of kinship on the part of Thackeray, who was related to the Webb family.[3]

The book closes with the accession of George the First, the ruin of Beatrix, and the marriage of Esmond to Lady Castlewood, with whom he retires to his estates in Virginia, where, many years

---

[1] At very nearly the time when these words of Thackeray were written, we heard Mr. Edward Everett's oration on the "Character of Washington," containing a description of Marlborough's palace of Blenheim, which is worthy to stand beside even the masterly sketch in "Esmond." "But to me, at noontide or in the evening, the gorgeous pile was as dreary as death, its luxurious grounds as melancholy as a churchyard. It seemed to me not a splendid palace, but a dismal mausoleum, in which a great and blighted name lies embalmed like some old Egyptian tyrant, black and ghastly in the asphaltic contempt of ages, serving but to rescue from an enviable oblivion the career and character of the magnificent peculator and miser and traitor to whom it is dedicated; needy in the midst of his ill-gotten millions; mean at the head of his victorious armies; despicable under the shadow of his thick-woven laurels; and poor and miserable and blind and naked amidst the lying shams of his tinsel greatness."—EVERETT'S "Orations and Speeches," vol. iv., p. 44.

[2] "Henry Esmond," chap. ix.

[3] William M. Thackeray, grandfather of the novelist, married a Miss Webb.

afterwards, the story is supposed to be written for their grandchildren. Apart from the accuracy, power, and finish of *Esmond*, in a strictly literary point of view, there is in it a charm of tenderness, sweetness, and purity which would make one envious of the reader who has in store the delight of a *first* reading of it.

The word realistic, as applied to Thackeray's writings, must be received in a dramatic rather than a literal sense. He distinctly claims to be the painter of commonplace as a neglected corner of the great field in which so much had been done before his work began, and he will not be tempted aside from it. What is called fine writing he avoided by artistic instinct—a natural distaste for all affectation, which led him always to choose the simplest and most direct means to his object. Humor, as distinguished from the narrower gift of wit, was the leading feature of his mind, and to its development he brought a thorough refinement, an exquisite purity, and an unyielding fidelity to truth. His realism is that of a perfectly sustained probability, consistent at every point with the conditions presented, and, rebel as we may against the ending of some of his stories, we cannot successfully combat their absolute truth to the life. There is, indeed, through all he wrote, an undertone of sadness, a tacit recognition of that unceasing struggle between good and evil which must be ever present to great souls like his; but it is never the sadness of despair. It is rather the melancholy inseparable from his genuine sympathy with his fellowmen in the tangled web of this world's troublous history. His natural temperament is described by a friend as tinged with this element of sadness, but united to a "capacity for instant frolic" which made him the most delightful of companions for a passing hour and won him hosts of friends. It is only since his death that the world has known what a burden of physical pain he had to endure through long years—suffering borne so quietly that very few knew of its existence, but which was steadily sapping the springs of life, and which make it a marvel that he should have done the work he accomplished. Added to this there came upon the home he loved a blight which nothing could remedy, and the young wife who was unspeakably dear to him was severed from him by a barrier impassable as death itself.[1] Had there been in his nature a fibre of unmanly weakness, these accumulated ills must have told fatally upon him; but the brave heart remained always true to itself, and the desert places along his own pathway were made to blossom into kindly charities for others.

The story of his life, as regards incident or event, may be briefly traced. He had, as we have said, studied art, but rather as the pastime of a man of fortune than with any serious intention. Af-

[1] A severe illness resulted in the loss of Mrs. Thackeray's reason.

terwards he read law, and was, in fact, regularly admitted to the bar by the Society of the Middle Temple, but never held a brief nor probably desired to do so. The Benchers were glad to testify their satisfaction in adding his name to the long list of those lights of literature already enrolled among them, and Thackeray himself was not indifferent to being associated with so much of ancient and honorable renown. It is said that, at his death, there was an effort made to obtain the consent of his family to lay him in those quiet precincts of the old Temple Church, where lie the ashes of Goldsmith, with whom his name will be ever united through the noble tribute in his *Humorists;* but it was finally decided, in compliance with the wish of his daughters, that he should rest in Kensal Green, where those he loved best might sleep near him, and the Benchers erected a memorial tablet in their church.

As has been stated, the young art-student who so delighted in the freedom and gayety of his "'prentice days" in Paris, had become a writer for periodicals at home long before he had any thought of literature as a profession, and when but three-and-twenty he was a regular contributor to the brilliant pages of *Fraser's.* A trace of the experiences of those days is to be found now and then in his later works, when an impecunious Grecian, who has all knowledge except the practical, appeals to our laughter or our pity. The then editor, Maginn, was an extreme type of this character, and the relief afforded him by the almost princely generosity of the Parisian contributor more than once opened the doors of the debtor's prison for him. It was, indeed, rather a reckless set over whom the still more reckless editor presided, and it is sad to recall the names of several who afterwards belied the splendid promise of their great powers, and ruined lives full of grand possibilities. Although no article from Thackeray's pen is to be found under any of his afterwards well-known pseudonyms until 1837, his youthful face, with the familiar spectacles, is found in a picture, by Maclise, of a banquet which was given more than two years earlier. The figures included twenty-seven persons, among whom were Coleridge, Southey, Carlyle, and Edward Irving. The first contribution bearing the signature of "Charles Yellowplush" appeared in the form of a review of a silly book on etiquette put forth by a woollen-draper named Skelton, and entitled *My Book; or, The Anatomy of Conduct.* The writer seems to have been possessed of the harmless mania of instructing the world in an art in which he was probably as little versed as might be, and, the book happening to fall under Thackeray's notice, his hatred of snobbery led him at once to seize upon it as lawful prey. For consistency's sake he decided to present his criticism as the work of a fashionable footman, throwing it into the form of a letter from No. — Gros-

venor Square (N. B., Hairy Bell), and addressed to the editor. An added touch of absurdity was the name "Skeleton" in speaking of the author of *The Anatomy*, and the letter itself was described as containing "Fashionable Fax and Polite Annygoats." The attention which it attracted made Charles's letter one of the features of the day, and the ambitious footman was requested to continue his contributions, which accordingly were presently forthcoming in the form of *Yellowplush Papers*, and adorned with those characteristic illustrations which, once seen, can never be forgotten. It was about this time that the first meeting between Thackeray and Dickens took place, concerning which so many misstatements have been made. It has been said that when the latter writer was seeking for some one to illustrate *Pickwick* Mr. Thackeray presented some of his own sketches, but that they were rejected as unsuitable. Greatly chagrined at the disappointment, he put up the drawings, exclaiming angrily: "Well, if you will not let me draw, I will write," and thenceforward set himself before the public as a rival of the already popular "Boz." The coloring given by such a form of the incident is unjust in every particular to Thackeray, whose literary career did not, in fact, practically begin until a year later, and whose whole tone towards Dickens was always that of the most cordial admiration and regard. The story as given above is materially different from his own account of what he used to call "Mr. Pickwick's lucky escape." At a dinner of the Royal Academy long afterwards, he said, after some graceful allusions to the early success of Mr. Dickens, who was present: "I recollect walking up to his chambers in Furnival's Inn with two or three drawings in my hand, which, strange to say, he did not find suitable. But for the unfortunate blight which came over my artistical existence it would have been my pride and my pleasure to have endeavored one day to find a place on these walls for one of my performances." The only interruption that ever occurred in the friendly relations of the two, who were destined to an inseparable union in literary fame, was on the occasion when Mr. Dickens unfortunately, and, as it seems from all the facts of the case, unwarrantably interfered in a difficulty between Thackeray and Mr. Edmund Yates. The latter was certainly entitled to the strongest possible condemnation, having, without a shadow of excuse, made an attack upon Thackeray, not only uncalled for, but utterly unjustifiable. It was printed in a periodical little known this side of the water, called *Town Talk*. The article was coarse in tone, false in statement, and personally offensive—in short, unworthy in every particular of its author, who doubtless repented his foolish and wrong-headed act as soon as it had passed out of his control. Had the writer been a stranger to Thackeray, or an obscure person, it is nearly certain

that it would have been passed by in contemptuous silence. But it was well known to be from the pen of a member of the Garrick Club, well acquainted with Thackeray, and recognized as one of the cleverest reviewers of the day. Thackeray's indignation found expression in a scathing letter, which appeared two days later, and which, though evidently written under the utmost exasperation of feeling, left him clearly master of the situation. But shortly afterwards, carried away by his sense of the injustice and malignity from which he suffered, he determined to submit the question to the decision of a committee of the Garrick as to whether the license for such attacks would not be "fatal to the comfort of the club and intolerable in a society of gentlemen." Up to this point the honors had been all his own, but this further step was undeniably a mistake. The committee took his view of the case and decided that the offending member was bound, in honor, to make an apology or to retire from the club. The latter refused to recognize the authority of the committee, and threatened to bring suit for his vindication. In this undignified aspect of the affair,—to make matters worse,—Dickens, of whose support Thackeray was entirely certain, entered into the difficulty as on the opposite side; that is to say, he desired to act as mediator between the disputants, but voted against the decision rendered, declaring that the committee "had nothing on earth to do with the question." If he had been content to believe that he personally "had nothing on earth" to do with it, further, he would have saved the warm heart of Thackeray from a bitter pang and himself an uncalled for and unfriendly act. He did interfere, and added fuel to flame by assuring Mr. Yates that it was not "possible for him to set right what was amiss," in view of a communication couched in such terms as used in the above-mentioned letter. The coolness to which the affair gave rise between Dickens and Thackeray was never removed until only a few days before that Christmas Eve which, for the greater of the two, was to end all strife, and pain, and bitterness. Meeting in the lobby of a club-house, they looked into each other's eyes, and, moved by one impulse, coming from what heart-deeps who can tell, they clasped hands in perfect reconciliation. From the first dawn of Dickens's fame, Thackeray was always one of his most appreciative and kindly critics, although he protested strongly against the tendency of such books as *Oliver Twist*, classing them among what he called Newgate calendar literature. In *Fraser's* he thus speaks of that novel: "The power of the writer is so amazing that the reader at once becomes his captive and must follow him whithersoever he leads—and to what are we led? Breathless to watch all the crimes of 'Fagin,' tenderly to deplore the errors of 'Nancy,' to have for 'Bill Sykes'

a kind of admiration and pity, and an absolute love for the society of the 'Dodger.' . . . . A most agreeable set of rascals, indeed, who have their virtues, too—but not good company for any man. We had better pass them by in decent silence, for as no writer can or dare tell the whole truth concerning them and faithfully explain their vices, there is no need to give *ex parte* statements of their virtues." It is evident that the mind of Thackeray, wide as was its grasp, had not the capacity to foreshadow a possible Zola as one of the products of the century, or that, having "dared" to do such work as his, there should be found not only publishers but admiring readers of it, and more monstrous still that a woman should be the translator by whose means the hideous evil should obtain a yet wider scope.[1]

The terrible story of *Catharine* was written as a check upon such a class of romance as represented vice in false colors by showing its sunny side, so to speak, and it is certainly a powerful plea against the sentimentalism which sometimes runs riot among us, when murderers' cells are turned into bowers of beauty by floral offerings of enthusiastic sympathizers, and hysterical professions of religious conversion held up for the edification of the uninteresting or respectable portion of the community. "As tender a hand to the poor, as kindly a word to the unhappy as you will, but in the name of common-sense, let us not expend our sympathies on cutthroats and other such prodigies of evil."

It is needless to say that the attack upon Thackeray, which has been described, was supplemented by others which he did not deign to notice. Occasionally, however, something more pretentious or ridiculous than the average would arouse either his wrath or his sense of humor to the extent of calling forth a reply. One of these was a critique in the *Times*, brought out by his Christmas book, *The Knickleburys on the Rhine*, in which the writer aimed to be strongly sarcastic, and succeeded in being weakly impertinent. The amusement it afforded Thackeray was only equalled by the relish with which the public received his answer, in the shape of the preface to a second edition published immediately after, entitled *An Essay on Thunder and Small Beer*. The satire with which Jupiter Jeames was described as trying to "dazzle and roar like his awful employer," was such as only Thackeray could use, and all London laughed at the result of the unequal contest. But an animus to the prejudice of every after work of Thackeray was thenceforward noticeable in the great journal; and it was remarked as a significant fact, that the *Times* alone, of all the dailies, on the

[1] A few years ago we were informed by the late Mr. John T. Crow, then managing editor of "The Sun," of Baltimore, that a woman of that city, calling herself "John Stirling," is the translator of Zola's works.

occasion of his death, had no special article on the mournful theme.

The *Paris Sketch Book*, Thackeray's first independent publication, appeared in 1840, and *The Great Hoggarty Diamond*, in *Fraser's*, came out soon after. The latter called forth a letter from John Sterling, as given in his *Life* by Carlyle, which is doubly valuable as a tribute and a prophecy. "What is there better in Fielding or Goldsmith? The man is a true genius, and with quiet and comfort might produce masterpieces that would last as long as any we have, and delight millions of unborn readers. There is more truth and nature in one of these papers than in all ——'s novels together." The biographer adds: "Thackeray, always a close friend of the Sterling house, will observe that this is dated 1841, not 1851, and have his own reflections on the matter."[1] Close upon these came *The Confessions of Fitz-Boodle*, followed by a series of short stories,—*Men's Wives*, *Raven Wing*, *Mr. and Mrs. Frank Berry*, while numerous sketches were appearing in other magazines less prominent than *Fraser's*, and at the same time the author was assistant editor of *The Examiner*.

The *Memoirs of Barry Lyndon*, already mentioned, was the strongest of his efforts at this period. So entirely sustained indeed is the realism of this wonderful creation that, like the acting of a Macready or a Booth, it requires an effort of the will to shake off the illusion. It seems singular that this work alone should not have sufficed to make the author famous, so great is it in every element of skill and strength; but while it did much to secure the position already achieved, the work which was to place him "first among the first" of English novelists was yet to come. He was fully entered upon the career of a man of letters, having suffered the loss of a large part of his patrimony in a journalistic enterprise, which also seriously involved his stepfather. The dilettante habits of early life were of necessity laid aside, and it behooved him to set himself steadily to work—the more that he had married in 1837. But the pathetic story of his weary struggles with which romancing correspondents used to entertain us some thirty years ago, had no foundation in fact. In his visit to America, in 1852, such tales both amused and annoyed him, and he thought it worth while to contradict them by the jesting assertion, more than once repeated, that he had never been without a good dinner and the means to pay for it.

His domestic life seems to have been singularly happy until the shadow fell which darkened all after years, and made him "a widower to the end of his days." Of one child, who died in infancy, he could never speak without emotion, and his love for those

[1] Carlyle's "Life of Sterling," p. 287.

who grew up to womanhood is too well known to need mention. An adopted daughter was added to his household at the death of her father, an old friend of Thackeray, and was in all respects as his own child until her marriage to an officer in India, whither she accompanied her husband and where she died. When his mother was widowed for the second time, she also became a member of the little circle, honored, beloved, and happy in the fame of her gifted son and in the companionship of his children, until the sorrowful day when he was taken from them, and England and the world mourned with them.

There is a curious parallel in the history of *Vanity Fair* and *The Pickwick Papers* as to the chances upon which hung their success or failure. It is said of the latter that so little impression had been made upon the public mind by the earlier numbers that the publishers were seriously contemplating the withdrawal of the series, when suddenly the appearance of Mr. Samuel Weller upon the scene turned the tide and secured for the brilliant young author the hearing which was all he sought, or needed. In the case of *Vanity Fair*, a still more adverse fate seemed appointed. The first chapters were submitted to the editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*, under the title of "Pencil Sketches of English Society," but were declined, with the kindly-expressed regrets and compliments which do so little to take the sting out of such refusals. Had Thackeray been weighed down by the broken-hearted sense of incapacity which Mr. Trollope has attributed to him, here would have seemed a fitting occasion for its manifestation, but quite the contrary result ensued. The instinct of genius made him conscious of the value of the rejected papers, and he determined to submit them to a wider jurisdiction, bringing them out in monthly parts, whose yellow covers soon became as well-known as the long-familiar green wrappers of Dickens's stories. Coldly received by the critics at first, the wonderful power of the book soon became evident to the best minds of the day, and so, at last, his place in literature was won. During its publication he began to have that court paid him which eminent literary service is wont to command, and for the first time the reputation he had achieved in *Fraser's* and in *Punch* was practically recognized beyond the clubs and the literary circles of London. People of rank and fashion sought him out, and he became known as Tennyson, and Dickens, and Landseer, and Macaulay were known. But there was something more than fame and position for himself to be thought of,—the future of his children, than which no stronger motive could be conceived by a nature like his. This it was which led him to seek public place, and brought upon him the disapproval of many, who thought it derogatory to his greatness as a literary man that

he should desire other distinction. But it must be remembered that he was perhaps among the last to find out how deep and strong was his slowly-won hold upon the world of letters, and literature at best is not the most lucrative of professions. He seems to have always expected, or at least accepted as a matter of course, the disappointments which paved the way to his success; and it was a common thing for him to say at a dinner-party, or even more publicly, "They don't read my book," or "They are getting tired of my novels." On one occasion he said to a gentleman in a large company, "So you don't mean to publish my book?" There was not the slightest affectation in such openness, it was simply a recognition of facts as they were, and he saw no reason for concealing what all present had the means of knowing, whether they actually did know of them or not. It will readily appear, then, that such a man would be apt to look forward to a diminution of popularity, and consequently of fortune, rather than to the reverse, and while he certainly did not undervalue his calling, he was not especially sanguine as to his own pecuniary prospects therein. Had he possessed the calm assurance of continued success which characterized Charles Dickens, he would probably never have thought of joining the English legation at Washington, or of entering the civil service at home, or of standing for Parliament. He would have felt, like his brilliant contemporary just named, that to be himself was to be something far higher and greater than any title or any place that could be bestowed upon him. He was not so constituted, however, and it is in nowise derogatory to him to say that, had the offer of elevation to a title which Dickens received been made to Thackeray, he would not, like Dickens, have declined it. A letter of his own puts the matter beyond question. "I don't see why men of letters should not very cheerfully coincide with Mr. —— in accepting all the honors, places, and prizes which they can get. The amount of such as will be awarded to them will not, we may be pretty sure, impoverish the country much; and if it is the custom of the state to reward by money, or titles of honor, or stars and garters of any sort, individuals who do the country service, ... there can be no reason why men of letters should not have the chance as well as men of the robe or the sword; . . . . nor surely need the literary man be more squeamish about pensions and ribbons and titles than the ambassador, general or judge."[1]

With the feeling that his own term of life might not be very long, Thackeray set himself then to the task of replacing the fortune lost to him in early manhood, and one marvels at the steadfastness of purpose carried out to the end, in view of that ill-health

[1] Trollope's "Thackeray," p. 37.

which his great self-control kept so successfully out of sight; for with all his native frankness, he was very reticent in matters purely personal. There was in fact scarcely a trace of egotism, strictly speaking, in his nature, and while he never hesitated to give his opinions upon any subject, and was singularly, almost excessively, candid in expressing himself, yet there was a limit beyond which no one passed,—a sacred reserve never broken, even in the closest intimacy of friendship, as to his inner life. It used to be said of him that he was not a man of much feeling, since he carried his burden with so cheery an air, but the world knows better now, and honors the manly courage which covered his wounds, bearing them silently and alone.

After the great success of *Vanity Fair*, *Pendennis* came out, and met with cordial reception, and it soon became known that Thackeray was to appear as a lecturer. He seems to have made the venture without any very glowing anticipations, but simply as a matter of duty. The "Humorists of the Eighteenth Century" formed his theme, and Willis's Rooms in London where they were delivered, were crowded with persons of the best type, who came not to learn anything new of the men treated of, but to hear the acknowledged leader of English humorists of their own day give his views of those worthies whose mantle might be said to have fallen upon himself. As was to be expected, they were found well worth hearing, and became at once an event in the literary circles of the metropolis.

In Edinburgh he was especially honored, and it was said that no lecturer of the time, not even Carlyle, ever aroused such enthusiasm there as did Thackeray. Quiet and undemonstrative, using no gestures, and depending rather on the thing to be said than on the manner of saying it, there was that of earnestness and sincerity about him which won upon the downright character of his Northern hearers to an extent greatly surprising and gratifying to him, and his popularity was unbounded. At a subsequent period he was approached in regard to his willingness to stand for election to Parliament from Auld Reekie, and though he would have been more than glad to have accepted the honor intended for him, he felt obliged to let them know that he was in favor of providing innocent amusements for the people on Sunday, a fact which he was aware would at once end the matter. But only thus could his essential truthfulness and honesty be satisfied, and the result brought him neither regret nor resentment.

Of his journeys to America, in 1852 and 1855, and his lectures in the larger Eastern cities, it is needless to speak at length. Everywhere he won friends and admirers, and if for a time some of us, fearing a repetition of the Dickens episode, held aloof from

any marked expression of welcome, lest the satirist, distinctively so called, should in return deal more harshly with our national foibles than even Boz, the ideal of good-fellowship, had done; yet the unpretending simplicity of the man soon conquered such reserve, and he was treated everywhere with honor and respect, although without the overwhelming demonstrations whereof his genial brother in letters complained with such ostentation of fatigue. So great was the influence of the lectures, that booksellers declared themselves unable to fill the demand for Queen Anne literature; and Swift, Addison, Steele, and Sterne, Pope, Prior, Gay, and Goldsmith became the themes of the day, as familiarly discussed as Scott and Byron, or Bulwer, Dickens, and Thackeray. A special beauty of the lecturer's method was a sort of unstudied modulation of the voice, and it is remembered by many who used to hear him, that his reading of those wonderful lines of Addison,—

"Soon as the evening shades prevail,"

was one of the few absolutely perfect renderings to be heard in a lifetime.

But the value of his lectures lies more in what is essentially his own, that tender touch which brings out the highest and best of the men he speaks of. Can one forget that sketch of the old mother whom Pope loved better than fame or honors, to whom he turned in the hour of his greatest triumphs for a sympathy dearer than triumph? There is something indescribable in the effect with which, after picturing the struggle, "the fever of victory, genius, and hope, and anger," through which the brilliant, bitter, relentless, and undaunted poet fought his way to fame, the lecturer suddenly turns to that other figure, the fond mother, "as she sits in the quiet cottage at home," and writes, "I send you my daily prayers and I bless you, my deare." It has been thought by some that Thackeray has rather overrated the genius of Pope, so earnest is his admiration, so strongly does he dwell upon the immense mental force which subdued difficulties seemingly insurmountable; yet when he has told all there is to tell, ennobled as is the story by his own eloquence, he bids us, in forming our estimate of Pope's character, "always take into account that constant tenderness and fidelity of affection which pervaded and sanctified his life, and never forget that maternal benediction." So does he always pay homage to that which is true, and sweet, and sacred in our nature, this great-souled satirist, this gentlest of cynics, whom the world is learning now, at length, to understand.

How generous he was in his praise—not alone of the dead, but of the living. A single sentence of his about his favorites in literature is worth a volume of common eulogy. He was always ready

to acknowledge the claims of his contemporaries, too, and on numberless occasions he found opportunity for words of manly commendation of writers in this country as well as in his own.

Thackeray returned to England a much richer man for his American ventures, and with enhanced reputation as a lecturer. The pleasant house in Kensington Gardens, which became the family residence, purchased and remodelled after plans of his own, was among the substantial fruits of his success, and all pressing anxiety as to his children's future was ended. A friend, noticing the pains bestowed on the new home, quoted the line of Horace:

"Sepulchri
Immemor struis domos,"[1]

when Thackeray, in a matter of fact way, replied that he was, on the contrary, *memor sepulchri*, since, in the event of his death, the house would always rent for so much a year.

His first attempt at delivering his lectures to the youth of Oxford gave rise to an amusing episode which he used to relate with great relish. It was, of course, necessary to obtain leave from the authorities as a matter of form, which would have required but the slightest intimation of Thackeray's wish, had the application been made to the Chancellor, the Duke of Wellington, who was an admirer of the then famous author. But the dignitary to whom the request was made knew nothing of such trivial matters as novels and novelists. The lecturer presented himself in due form, and the following colloquy ensued: "Pray, what can I do for you, sir?" in the blandest of tones. "My name is Thackeray." "So I see by this card." "I seek permission to lecture within the precincts." "Ah! you are a lecturer; what subjects do you undertake—religious or political?" "Neither; I am a literary man." "Have you written anything?" "Yes; I am the author of *Vanity Fair*." "I presume a Dissenter. Has that anything to do with John Bunyan's book?" "Not exactly; I have also written *Pendennis*." "Never heard of those works, but no doubt they are proper books." "I have also contributed to *Punch*." "I have heard of that; is it not a ribald publication?"

One can almost catch the gleam of fun behind those familiar spectacles as the narrator recalled the scene. Thackeray's admiration and esteem for Charlotte Bronte is associated with these lectures in an especial manner from the fact that, on the occasion of the second of the series, "Congreve and Addison," delivered at Willis's Rooms when its gilded splendors were graced by the presence of "the cream of London society," as she expresses it, he singled her out of the brilliant throng, and asked her opinion of

[1] "Od.," ii. 18.

his essay with that naïveté which was never subdued into strictly conventional bounds.[1] He always paid her marked attention when possible, and held the highest appreciation of her genius. On the other hand, Miss Bronte was among the first to acknowledge the greatness of Thackeray, and the second edition of *Jane Eyre* had been dedicated to him, long before she ever saw him, "as the social regenerator of his day, as the very master of the working corps who would restore to rectitude the warped state of things."

We have said that Thackeray has never written but with a distinctly moral purpose, warning against evil as a thing hideous in itself; inculcating goodness, purity, and truth by inference, by contrast, or by direct teaching. But it has been charged that, in one instance, at least, he deviated from this rule. His account of Fielding has been declared mischievous in its influence, from the light way in which the character, the follies, and vices of that author are treated. Among those who felt most strongly upon this point was Miss Bronte. She took the ground, in common with many others then and now, that it must harm the morals of the young, as painting in colors far too alluring courses which, in their very nature, must lead to sin, disgrace, and ruin, and both in her correspondence and in her talk she protested against its influence with intense earnestness. But, with her own sad experience in life, no other view was possible. With all her wonderful intellectual gifts, she was a person of strong prejudice and self-opinion, measuring everything by the narrow standard of individual judgment, and constitutionally incapable of that broad toleration of human frailty which made Thackeray as utterly fearless of misconstruction in his portrayal of Fielding and Steele as of "Becky Sharp" or "Blanche Amory." The miserable fate of Miss Bronte's only brother made the question too painful and personal for an unbiassed estimate, as her narrow and secluded training rendered her intolerant towards certain forms of religious belief opposed to her own.[2]

It is well known that Thackeray was a candidate for the representation of Oxford in Parliament, and his conduct throughout the whole affair was so characteristic as to deserve at least passing mention. His exercise of "personal influence" upon the voters consisted in the simple inquiry as to whether the person approached had or had not promised to support the other side. In case of an

---

[1] Mrs. Gaskell's "Life of Charlotte Bronte," vol. ii., p. 175.

[2] Mrs. Gaskell's "Life of Charlotte Bronte," vol. ii., p. 179. In an admirable paper—"The Anti-Catholic Spirit of Certain Writers"—which appeared in the "Catholic World" for February last, Mr. Eugene L. Didier has directed attention to the inexcusable bitterness against everything Catholic shown by a number of literary lights.

affirmative answer, he would say: "Sir, keep your word; here is my hand on it; let us part good friends," with an unaffected heartiness that made him almost as many friends among his opponents as among his adherents. Of the other candidate, Mr. Cardwell, he spoke in the kindest terms, using no trick or artifice on his own behalf, and stating in a simple, straightforward way his views on the Liberal side and his grounds for believing that the country would be better and more truly represented by an admixture of the middle-class element than by the continuance of an exclusively aristocratic control. When he was defeated it was a matter of surprise that the majority against him was so small, and, in fact, it seems likely that the increased popularity gained for him by the better knowledge of his character on the occasion more than compensated for the natural disappointment to him. His English love of fair play was illustrated by an incident occurring on the day which made known the result of the election. A party wearing his colors were passing along the street in view of a window at which Thackeray was standing with some friends. From the other direction they were met by a smaller group of the successful voters, and, as a natural result, a scuffle began in which the superior number seemed to be getting the better, when, to the amazement of the lookers-on, Thackeray, with one of his hasty expletives, dashed out of the room, down the stairs, and, the next moment, was seen collaring one of his own partisans, striking right and left, his tall stature giving him ample scope, until he actually turned the tables in favor of the other side, and came back in perfect good-humor and satisfaction, no serious harm having been done to anybody.

Thackeray's Liberalism was not the outgrowth of any special combination of circumstances. He had all his life a leaning towards such opinions, as is evident from his youthful views on French political questions, and his unreserved and enthusiastic admiration of Washington's cause and career, no less than in the character of the journal which he had attempted to make the medium of his influence upon English thought, and of whose failure he wrote that it made him understand how the gentleman felt who found himself following his own funeral. A wide toleration of the feelings and opinions of others, while reserving with firmness his right to think as he pleased, was a strong element in the power which he finally attained as a man and a writer. In mind, as in body, he was cast in a large mould, possessing some of the traits of both the countries in which his character was formed. To the sterling honesty and straightforwardness of an Englishman he joined the delicacy of insight and smoothness of expression characteristic of his neighbor across the Channel, and a great deal that is admirable in his style has an unmistakable Gallic flavor. The rapier-like

flash with which he is wont to impale the objects of his scorn, no less than the sparkling grace of his lighter vein, is strongly suggestive of a writer trained in the use of *la belle langue*, even without the further proof of his almost unconscious adoption of French words. In the use of what is termed broken English he is unsurpassed, and there is nothing more amusing in this particular than the eager incoherency of "Monsieur de Florac," nor more gracious and winning than the sweet blunders of his gentle mother. Perhaps no lovelier image is reflected in Thackeray's works than that of this exquisite character, although she fills but a small space upon his canvas. Her faithful remembrance of her early lover, lost to her in the first days of their happiness, her patient submission, her spotless purity, her childlike faith and goodness, the tender sorrow with which she mourns the death of "Thomas Newcome," after long years in which they have grown old apart, and the sacred earnestness of her prayers for his departed soul are beyond description. But, aside from its touching beauty, this delineation serves to illustrate a point in regard to Thackeray which has been rarely or never commented upon,—his respectful attitude towards the Catholic Church. While other writers—less great than he, perhaps, yet great in certain lines of thought—have used invective, scoff, and scorn against her where they did not purposely ignore her altogether, he has not, so far as we know, in a single instance so demeaned his high powers. In the character of "Father Holt," the Jesuit priest, in *Esmond*, there are numberless touches of genuine admiration, and it is to be noted that no other tone is used in the book, where the author speaks in his own person.

The Newcomes, full of satire from first to last, has yet no shaft to wound any sincerely Christian heart. The bad people in it are not even Catholics in name, and surely, in a work which deals so much with Rome, there would seem to be ample opportunity for any lurking animosity to the Church to show itself. Far from such a spirit is a letter from "Clive Newcome" to his father, which embodies, perhaps, as much of Thackeray's real feelings towards the Faith as could be put into words, and which seems to us the fittest possible close to a sketch which aims to present, at the least, a truthful picture of one of the grandest of intellects, as well as one of the noblest of human souls:

"There must be moments, in Rome, especially, when every man of friendly heart who writes himself English and Protestant, must feel a pang at thinking that he and his countrymen are insulated from European Christendom. An ocean separates us. From one shore or the other one can see the neighbor cliffs on clear days; one must wish sometimes that there were no stormy gulf between us, and from Canterbury to Rome a pilgrim could pass and not

drown beyond Dover. Of the beautiful parts of the great Mother Church I believe among us many people have no idea. We think of lazy friars; of pining, cloistered virgins; of ignorant peasants, worshipping wood and stones; bought and sold indulgences; absolutions; and the like commonplaces of Protestant satire. Lo! yonder inscription which blazes round the dome of the temple! so great and glorious, it looks like heaven almost, and as if the words were written in stars; it proclaims to all the world that this is Peter, and on this rock the Church shall be built against which Hell shall not prevail."[1]

THE CHURCH IN SPAIN.

1. *El Concordato de* 1851, *anotado con las leyes, decretos y disposiciones que se han publicado en su aclaracion*, por D. Antonio Elias de Molins. Madrid, 1882.
2. *Manual de Derecho Administrativo civil y penal de España y Ultramar para uso del Clero Parroquial*, ... 3 tomos, by the same author.
3. *Histoire Politique de l'Espagne moderne*, par M. de Marliani, Senateur, etc. 2 vols. Brussels, 1842.

I.

TRAVELLERS in the ancient Catholic lands of Continental Europe who look beneath the surface of things, examining carefully the social and material conditions of the people, and comparing conscientiously the present with the past, will soon discover how much the Church has had to do with developing and fostering the admirable qualities of the respective populations, and how exclusively the backwardness, the unrest, and the lawlessness so generally prevailing are to be traced to misgovernment and the revolutions begotten by it. Speaking of France, of Italy, and of Spain in particular, prejudiced or superficial observers are constantly heard to say: "The Church has had the exclusive training of these peoples for upwards of fifteen hundred years, and see what she has made of them!"

After seven years spent, at various intervals, in France, and three years just given to leisurely travel and serious study in the Italian

[1] "The Newcomes," chap. xxxv.

and Spanish peninsulas, the writer of this article has found no cause to blush for the Church's husbandry in any of these countries: the fruits of her culture, in spite of all the manifold and destructive agencies that have marred her work, are apparent in the noble institutions which still fill the land, in the intellectual qualities, the gentle lives, and the striking virtues of the people. When it is assumed that in any one of the three great countries mentioned, the Church ever had the free and untrammelled control either of the social institutions, or of the intellectual and moral training of the nation, the assumption, when calmly considered in the light of history, is found to be inconsistent with the facts. There never has been a single century, nor half a century, in the life of any one of these nations when Religion has been allowed to exercise, even within her own legitimate sphere, an undisputed sway over men's minds and actions, not to speak of the wider sphere where the statesman and the politician are supreme.

Not even within the small territory known as the States of the Church, was the Pontifical Government, in its palmiest days, permitted to mould its own subjects to the best purposes of Christian civilization during the reign of two successive Popes. Take any one of them, from the days of St. Gregory the Great, be it St. Leo I., or Gregory VII., or Innocent III., or Sixtus V., or the Ninth Pius, and on looking into the acts and events of each pontificate, it will be found that in each the very existence of the Church seemed in peril. Age after age it was one long and fierce battle for life, in which Religion had to confront domestic foes, allied with all the political power and worldly passions of European sovereigns and statesmen.

In Spain, looking back to the age when St. Leander, with his illustrious brothers, St. Isidore and St. Fulgentius, sustained so deadly a conflict with Arianism led by Leovigild the Great, I do not find a single century, a single reign, during which the Church had not to struggle either with the victorious Mohammedan, or the pagan pride and grasping greed of Gothic feudalism, or the selfish ambition, the insatiable avarice, and the unscrupulous despotism of the many dynasties who reigned simultaneously over the kingdoms of the peninsula, or swayed the united sceptres of Ferdinand and Isabella.

The Concordat of 1851, like those of 1737 and 1753, is only a hard, bad bargain, wrung by a revolutionary government from the Holy See. The Spanish Concordats of 1737 and 1851 imposed on the Head of the Church conditions which were only accepted as a grievous necessity by the latter, in order to close a long series of oppressive acts, and to ward off the danger of a formal schism. We shall presently look into these transactions and point out the

scant measure of religious liberty they guarantee to the Spanish Church. But neither this, nor, indeed, the calamities which have befallen Spanish Catholics within the last hundred years, nor the worse calamities with which the near future is pregnant, can be understood by Americans unless they lay aside certain false notions about the Spanish monarchy. Most of us have been brought up in the conviction that the Kings of Spain, from the reign of Isabella the Catholic to our own days, were the most devoted subjects of the Holy See, the most watchful protectors of Catholic interests within their vast dominions, the very ideal of Catholic sovereigns, in one word, just as the nation they governed is still held up to us as the model Catholic nation. A very cursory study of authentic Spanish history suffices to dispel such fond illusions.

There is nothing like looking facts in the face. Religion, to maintain her hold on our faith and reverence, needs only to be known in the clear light of truth. We shall hope all the more confidently for the future of Catholicity in Spain when we see what a curse to religion was the government of such despots as Charles V., Philip II., Philip III., and the other members of the Austrian dynasty, and how greater still was the evil inflicted on Spain and on religion by the Bourbon dynasty, beginning with Philip V. and continued down to the second Isabella.

The greatest misfortune that ever befell the land of St. Ferdinand was the discovery of America; and this was closely followed by the accession of the Austrian dynasty,—the ruinous reign of Charles V., which impoverished Spain to maintain the imperial supremacy, despoiled the Church, and gave the first fatal blow to the communal and provincial liberties, the only safeguard of religion and the people. For the first time since St. Leander and his glorious brother, St. Isidore, instituted the Spanish Cortes, the authority of this august assembly—the revered source of Spanish law and the protector of the religion and liberty of Spaniards—was openly contemned by the grandson of Isabella the Catholic, while a junta of foreigners, like Charles himself, natives of the Low Countries, was intrusted with the government of Spain and the management of her finances.

Just as we see the France of 1883 satisfying the national craving for military glory by insane projects of colonization and conquest on the remotest shores of Africa and Asia, while the last remnants of religious liberty and judicial independence are being destroyed at home, even so the Spain of 1517 was dazzled by the discoveries of Vasco Nuñez Balboa, followed in quick succession by the military expeditions of Cortez and Pizarro. Her noblest and bravest soldiers were drawn away from their own fertile and

neglected domains to desolate France and the Netherlands, to wage a bootless and inglorious war in Germany, to waste again and again the fairest tracts and most flourishing cities of Upper and Central Italy, and to disgrace the very name of Spaniards and Catholics by attacking the Pope in the City of the Holy Apostles, and there committing, during many long months, horrors and excesses which would have shamed the hordes of Attila and Alaric. And all these inhuman and sacrilegious Italian wars were undertaken or continued to enable the *Condottieri* in the imperial service to pay themselves by plundering the Italians and sacking Rome!

The present prostration of all industry, agriculture, and commerce in Spain; the incredible exhaustion of its financial resources, which, at this very moment, compels the King to recall the former Minister of Finance, Señor Camacho, and to allow him to carry out his baneful project of alienating all the forests and waste lands of the state, together with what remains unsold of the confiscated property of the Religious Orders, can only be understood and accounted for by remembering the wide and deep gulf of ruinous expenditure first opened by the wars of Charles V., widened and deepened still more by the mad enterprises of Philip II., and rendered hopelessly impassable by Philip III.

Into this flowed, never to return, all the wealth of the Indies, all the taxes wrung year after year for centuries from the greatly diminished and still more greatly impoverished agricultural populations of Spain, as well as the oppressive contributions exacted from all churchmen who could be forced to yield a single maravedi.

Let us hear on this point an author bitterly hostile to the Church, though a Spaniard, and probably professing to be a Catholic: "Disorder in the administration, the wasteful extravagance of the court, war, arbitrary rule as blind as it was violent, and the contempt of all law, such were the causes of the exhaustion felt by the country. In 1520 taxation of every kind was so enormous that the municipalities declared that the taxes were quite sufficient to meet the demands of the crown without having recourse to fresh imposts, and without, as they expressed it, 'burdening the king's conscience.' . . . . The Catholic kings (Ferdinand and Isabella) spent twelve thousand maravedis daily; Charles V. spent one hundred and fifty thousand.

"The usual contributions proved inadequate to these expenses, and the Cortes opposed an insuperable obstacle to fresh exactions, —they would only vote subsidies when the grievances they complained of had been remedied. . . . . Charles V. thereupon obtained from the Pope permission to create imposts and taxes on ecclesiasti-

cal property. Among the concessions wrung from the Holy See was the tax levied through the Bull of the Cruzada; besides that, commerce and industry were laid under fearful burdens. In 1526, Charles V. scrupled not to alienate his wife's dowry to support the war; in 1527, his army, being without pay, set out for Rome in order to force from the Pope what it could not get from the Emperor. In 1529, Charles, finding himself too poor to go to Italy, sells to Portugal the right of Spain over the Moluccas. He sold for 150,000 ducats to Cosmo de' Medici the strongholds of Florence and Leghorn. He was even on the point of selling to the Farnese family the states of Milan and Siena. When all these moneys were expended, he had recourse to foreign loans, the extremity of his need compelling him to pay 10, 20, and 30 per cent. interest. Is not this the Spain of our own days? Then, as now, all the revenues of the State were swallowed up in advance.

"In 1550 Charles V. had alienated nearly every source of public revenue: those of Castile for 800,000 ducats, that kingdom only yielding 920,000; those of Naples and Sicily for 700,000; . . . . those of Milan, amounting to 400,000 ducats, were alienated to their full extent, as well as the greater portion of those of Flanders. In all this were not comprised the gold and silver produced by America, the amount of which has been so variously estimated, but which, in any case, must have been very great.

"These usurious contracts were ruining the nation. Nevertheless, what they yielded proving to be insufficient, the Emperor solicited new money loans, but nobody accepted such proposals without receiving in advance the most substantial securities. Thus it was that the foreign money-lenders, the only persons willing to give him money, acquired exclusive privileges which killed all home industry and commerce. Thus did foreigners obtain from Charles V. the monopoly of all the export and import trade of Spain, both of these being by law forbidden to Spaniards. Thereby the domestic trade of Spain, as well as that with India and America, passed almost entirely into the hands of foreigners. All remonstrance on this subject was of no avail; the ever increasing needs of the imperial exchequer compelled the sovereign to shut his ears to the just complaints of his subjects."[1]

Thus began the domination of the House of Hapsburg in the Iberian peninsula. Were things any better under Philip II., the

[1] The Bull of the Cruzada mentioned in this extract was obtained as a privilege for the Spanish race in both hemispheres. It authorizes the Spaniard to eat meat on the days when the Church prescribes abstinence. In Spain the bull is published annually, and recounts the long, heroic struggle of the nation against Mohammedanism—the long crusade of seven hundred years against Arab and Moor. This is the ground on which the privilege rests. The alms given yearly by each individual for a copy of the bull is claimed by the royal exchequer. Marliani, i., pp. 43, 44.

son and successor of the Emperor Charles? We are so accustomed to hear this prince lauded to the skies as the great champion of Catholicity against Elizabeth of England and the Protestants of the Continent, that to write anything to the contrary would seem, to the unlearned majority of Catholics, to savor of heterodoxy. It is time that the championship of Philip II. and the services by him rendered to the cause of the Church should be submitted to the judgment of impartial history.

Philip began by annihilating whatever remained of the free institutions of his country. So great was the need of money and so universal and unblushing had public venality become, that deputies to the wretched Cortes of that reign had to purchase the votes of their electors, a choice costing the candidate 14,000 ducats.[1] In order to provide some remedy for the national ruin and bankruptcy bequeathed by the preceding reign, the ministers of Philip II. proposed seriously to their master to legalize the system of *repartimientos*, by which the natives of the West Indies and America were divided into large land lots, and, with these, sold to the highest bidder. This inhuman proposition was rejected by Philip because it would create in the New World a feudal system more iniquitous and more oppressive than that of Europe, and more dangerous to the Crown. They next advised him to repudiate all the contracts entered into by his father with foreign or native bankers, under the plea that these had already been overpaid by the exorbitant interest exacted and by the fruitful monopolies so long enjoyed by the usurers. This, again, Philip rejected because he feared to close against himself, by such repudiation, all the money-markets of Europe. Finally, in 1556, they bethought them of coining a depreciated currency, and only discontinued the vile practice, forbidden by the Councils of the Church under pain of excommunication, because the rogues who carried on the work quarrelled about the profits.[2]

Then followed a series of unworthy and oppressive financial measures which one would regard as incredible were they not attested by contemporary writers, themselves eye-witnesses of the facts they related. Ruy Gomez de Silva was sent into the provinces of Castile with full powers to mortgage or sell everything on which money could be raised, and to obtain loans or grants by every possible expedient. Even the Princess Juana was compelled to surrender the greatest part of the revenues bestowed on her by the Cortes or inherited from her parents. The King of Portugal sent a large quantity of East Indian wares, which were disposed of to great advantage in Flanders. Philip himself demanded of the

[1] Marina: "Teoria de las Cortes," p. 27.

[2] Micheli: "Relazione d'Inghilterra," fol. 79.

Low Countries a loan of twenty-four tons weight of gold, and got it. Encouraged by this, he forthwith asked a further grant of 800,000 florins, and, under various pretexts, in a single year he extorted from these oppressed provinces the enormous sum of 5,000,000 of ducats.

Following the example of the foolish dame who killed the hen that laid the golden eggs, the ever-needy despot imposed a tax of one ducat on every sack of wool carried on Spanish bottoms to the Low Countries and two ducats on every sack exported to France and Italy. When the ships were not Spanish this export tax was doubled. The woollen manufactures of Spain, like that of silk and every other national industry, were already perishing beneath the load of taxation or sacrificed to the interests of foreign monopolies controlled by the King's creditors. The raising of wool for foreign exportation was one resource left to Spanish producers. This was now imperilled by the new taxation. The nation sent forth a cry of alarm, and the Cortes of 1558 remonstrated with the King. He answered that sheer necessity compelled him to this measure.

This, however, was only one among many similar administrative acts equally ruinous to the national prosperity. The King mortgaged or farmed out to the highest bidder the crown domains, hamlets, villages, towns, fiefs, jurisdictional privileges, commercial property of every description. When the same Cortes of 1558 reminded him of the oath he had taken and the obligation he had contracted to protect all vested rights against violence and abuse, Philip only replied by putting up for sale the commanderies of the military orders, titles of nobility, the offices of *regidor*, *alcalde*, and register, all of which, up to that time, had been bestowed gratuitously as a reward for great public services.

And, these means proving to be insufficient, Philip asked the Pope to be allowed to sell all the Church property from which the clergy derived their resources, promising to indemnify them at some future day. At length he was driven to the necessity of seizing the goods and money of all merchants and travellers arriving in Spain from the East or West Indies.

Philip II. pretended to be, like the ancient caliphs of Damascus and Cordova, *dueño de vida y hacienda*, "master of the life and property" of every subject. The men who acted as his agents and instruments in this reckless course of oppression played the tyrant, each in his own sphere, and appropriated to themselves a goodly share of the spoils thus collected. Thus only a portion of the public plunder found its way to the royal treasury and went to defray the expenses of Philip's interminable wars. Meanwhile unspeakable misery reigned among the Spanish populations.

Ranke tells us that from 1575 to 1578 they were reduced to despair by the intolerable burdens placed on them.

When Philip had taken from the people all that the tax-gatherer could obtain by force or terror, and stripped the Church of the possessions guaranteed by the nation and by the rightful ownership of centuries, he cast about for some device for compelling the aristocracy to give up a part of their wealth. Setting aside all the titles and letters-patent granted by former kings of Spain, he decreed that all noblemen, of whatever rank, should have their titles examined and renewed. The court established for this revision began its labors with some of the highest and most ancient families in the kingdom, whom it deprived of their right to collect tithes of the sea-fisheries near their domains. But the ancient feudal power of the nobles was not so weakened nor their spirit so broken by long servility, that they did not take alarm at this invasion of their rights and resent this infraction of their privileges. They had been insensible to the sufferings of the oppressed popular classes; they had rejoiced at seeing the clergy despoiled and impoverished. Now that the King's hand was extended to seize their coronets and challenge their titles, they banded together like one man, and royalty gave way before them.

Disappointed and irritated by the ill success of his scheme, Philip, whose pecuniary need was ever on the increase, had once more recourse to the familiar expedient of plundering the clergy and the communes. Pius IV., sorely against his will and to avoid greater evils, granted the King one-half of the entire Church revenues in his dominions, and this concession was soon followed by yearly subsidies for the support of the Spanish fleet, these subsidies to be drawn from the same source and to continue so long as the King needed them. To be sure, the fleets of Spain in the Mediterranean and along the northwest coast of Africa were presumed to be chiefly employed in watching the Mohammedan pirates. We know, however, that they were more frequently destined for a far different service.

Nevertheless the battle of Lepanto stands out, at this period, as the one mighty event which saved Europe and Christendom from the yoke of Islam. For Spain's principal share in this memorable victory the world is indebted to the eloquence and saintly influence of Francis of Borgia, who gave the last years of his life and the last efforts of his apostolic zeal toward organizing this crusade against the Turk, thereby consummating the work begun by St. Bernard of Clairvaux. Then it was that Pius V. renewed in favor of Philip the *escusado*, or concession in perpetuity, of the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues, as well as the revenue arising from the sale of the bull of the *Cruzada*. These heavy burdens laid on

the clergy did not suffice; and Gregory XIII., after a long negotiation, had to grant a further tax of 170,000 gold crowns annually on all church property.

Simultaneously with these exactions, and when the Church of Spain found it impossible to bear the load of taxation thus laid on its members and its possessions, the people were called upon to furnish the King with additional subsidies. The *alcabala* tax, so heavy before, was then raised ten per cent. The government monopolized the manufacture and the sale of playing-cards — a most profitable industry—for the passion for gambling increased among all classes in proportion to the progress of the public misery; the extraction and sale of mercury also became a government monopoly; enormous duties were imposed on all objects imported into Spain, and an additional tax was placed on every pound of wool taken out of the kingdom.

Again the Cortes protested against the crushing load thus placed on property-holders and producers. The King was courageously reminded that his conduct was in open violation of his coronation oath. What cared Philip? His reply was to ask for contributions in kind, when it became impossible to obtain gold or silver. Every province throughout its length and breadth was ransacked for produce of every description. Andalusia was forced to furnish 2000 quintals of hard-baked bread; Seville had to contribute 10,000 barrels of wine; Galicia 6000 quintals of salt meat. Then came, in 1589, the oppressive impost, known as that of *millones*, which fell on the articles most necessary to the sustenance of the people in Spain,—wine, olive oil, and meat of all kinds. This impost yielded 8,000,000 ducats annually. At length, when clergy and people could give no more, reduced, as they were, to such extreme poverty as had never before been heard of; when industry and commerce were prostrated under the load of taxation, Philip was, literally, forced to beg a subsidy from his nobles. They were the only class in the kingdom whom his long series of exactions had left untouched. They gave generously. It was only a drop of water thrown into the bottomless gulf.

"In 1595," says Marliani, quoting Gonzalves de Avila, biographer of Philip II., "a year thrice as fruitful as most of the preceding, 35,000,000 of crowns in gold and silver are landed at San Lucar (near Cadiz); in 1596 not a trace was to be found of all that money in Castile; the difficulties of the royal treasury still subsisted in all their hideous nakedness. Then Philip wished his counsellors to inform him of the cause of this phenomenon, thereby showing himself to be as ignorant an administrator as he was a cruel despot. He deplores his abject poverty after all the money extorted by violence, and finds no remedy to it save in a new course of

spoliation. Taking up the project first set on foot in 1575, he decrees that the creditors of the state shall forfeit all their revenues, their rights, the property held by them in pledge, all the title-deeds intrusted to them; all these were to be restored to the government. This system of public robbery, adopted and legalized by a great sovereign, filled Spain and Europe with consternation. Everywhere the unfortunate men thus despoiled had recourse to bankruptcy. The remaining creditors demand the restitution of their capital. Philip replies by asking them for more money, and accepts loans on the most usurious conditions, pledging in advance all the revenues of the state, and spending the money loaned as soon as received. When he found himself once more penniless, and when the state could no longer claim as its own a single source of public revenue, ... when the cities of Spain refused to grant him a single contribution, because the produce of the soil and the other property revenues no longer sufficed to pay the taxes, the sovereign of the empire on which the sun never set, was forced to hold out his hand and beg." (Vol. i., pp. 57, 58.)

We are accounting here for the present impoverished condition of Spain, for the chronic lethargy in which are sunk, and sunk hopelessly, to all seeming, the once splendid industrial activities of the nation, the intelligent and successful commercial enterprise, the prosperity once so unrivalled and so envied. More than that, we are explaining the apparently inexplicable contradiction of a national Church despoiled, impoverished, and restricted in the use of her most sacred rights in a land where no rival faith exists; of a clergy reduced, in the immense majority of its members, to a state of poverty so degrading, that their lot is more pitiable than that of our hod-carriers; to a loss of influence so utter that the meanest can insult them with impunity. It is commonly thought that this sad state of things began with the French invasion under Napoleon I. But the "origin of contemporary Spain" is to be sought for as far back as the beginning of the sixteenth century. We have only pointed out to the intelligent reader where he has to seek for the causes which, century after century, and reign after reign, were at work to ruin and debase Spain, to despoil, fetter, and degrade religion.

And, while urging this consideration on the students of history, we are anxious to dispel from their minds a very serious error. They must have read a hundred times, at least, that up to the nineteenth century Spain was the most priest-ridden of countries, since there the Inquisition kept souls in subjection, and repressed by sheer terror free thought, free inquiry, and free speech on all matters touching on religion. We think we can promise American readers a true history of the Spanish Inquisition from the pen of

the illustrious Joaquin Guichot y Parody, whose *History of Seville* is just completed, and whose *History of Andalusia* has already won for him such distinction among his countrymen. Thoroughly conversant with the manuscript archives of Seville, he has been able to follow, step by step, the rise of the Inquisition in that city and its progress down to the days of the untrustworthy Llorente. As he affirms in the former of the two works published by him, and, as he repeatedly asserted in his conversations with the writer of these pages, "the Spanish Inquisition was purely and simply a political institution, a formidable *police organization* in the hands of the government." The pity was that religion ever was induced to take any share in its proceedings, or to give any countenance whatever to the designs of a government already become most arbitrary and greedy under Ferdinand of Aragon. His consort, the wise and good and gentle Isabella the Catholic, reluctantly yielded a half consent to its establishment. The Holy See more than once condemned its atrocious cruelties and wholesale confiscations. But the opportunity of confiscation, not the preservation of religious unity, was the motive of the avaricious and unpitying Ferdinand. The aristocracy and the wealthy mercantile classes were glad to find, in denunciation, an easy means of cancelling the debts contracted toward the hated Hebrew race, or of ridding themselves of successful rivals in business. This, and much more than this, will be made clear, when the annals of the Sacred Tribunal are given to the public without note or comment, ungarbled and unmutilated. Then every fair-minded man will be able to judge for himself of Llorente's merits or demerits as an historian. Then, also, men will see that churchmen, as well as laymen,—nay, the very highest dignitaries in the land,—were the victims of this watchful and all-pervading police organization, whose *detectives* penetrated everywhere, saw and heard everything, and respected neither place, nor rank, nor character.

The royal treasury profited too well by these confiscations, even under Ferdinand and Isabella, not to work so sure a mine of wealth under Charles V., Philip II., and their successors. Kings of Spain who could send an army of Lutheran mercenaries to sack Rome, desecrate and plunder her churches and monasteries, and imprison a Pope in his own palace, or who, like Philip V., could bring their kingdom to the very verge of schism, while pretending to be the upholders and defenders of Catholicity, were not likely to respect religious freedom at home, or to scruple to employ the Inquisition to stamp out among the clergy themselves every expression of opinion contrary to their own policy, every sentiment that did not conform to the government standard of political and religious orthodoxy.

In order to see the rapid progress of the national ruin under the third Philip, it is only necessary to quote the following passage from Marliani: "Under Philip III., America poured immense wealth into Spain. From 1608 to 1616 the sums thus received amounted yearly to ten or eleven millions of ducats. From 1620 to 1624 this yearly tribute ascended to fourteen millions. But all these were absorbed in advance by the extravagance of the court and the peculations of those in power. One might sum up the result of this reign in the picture drawn of it by the Council of Castile and the national Cortes. The former declared to the King: 'Our dwellings fall into ruin, and no one thinks of rebuilding them; our country folk forsake the land, the villages are deserted, the fields uncultivated, the churches empty.' The Cortes say, on their side: 'If these evils continue, we shall soon be without a peasantry to till the soil, without pilots to steer our ships; people will even cease to marry. Should this poverty continue, the kingdom must perish within another century.'" (Marliani, vol. i., p. 60.)

Forty years later, on November 25th, 1667, Spain, being at war with Portugal and the Netherlands, and the Council of State despairing of finding money anywhere for the public expenses, sent in a memoir to the Queen Regent, which is still preserved in the archives of Simancas. "Never," it is there said, "since the reign of Ferdinand the Catholic, was Spain so near its ruin, so exhausted, or so destitute of the means required to meet so great a danger. Wherefore, among the various expedients proposed for finding money, the Council advises Your Majesty to rise above every fear, and to apply to the need of the state one-half of the gold, other precious metals, and diamonds coming to Spanish ports on the galleons. It is the only speedy means to meet our present need and to ward off the danger which threatens the monarchy; the loss will fall on wealthy persons, who are for the most part foreigners, and not subject to Your Majesty. . . . . In submitting this project, the Council of State does not forget what a detriment its execution would cause to commerce and to the credit of the state. For the persons to be injured by it contracted in the Indies, under the guarantee of our national honor, that their property should be safely sent to destination, and this engagement was confirmed by the King. Still, we are equally aware that men daily consent to the loss of an arm or a leg to save their lives; that, in a fire, people throw out of the windows, at the risk of ruining them, their most precious articles of furniture; and that, in a storm, a captain will not hesitate to cast overboard the richest cargo in order to keep his ship afloat. . . . . Considering, moreover, that the extreme peril of our situation will not permit us to overlook

any means of obtaining money, the Council of State begs Your Majesty to examine, in your prudence, whether it would not be expedient to ask one thousand persons of all conditions, churchmen and laymen, to lend the Government, each of them one thousand ducats. Your ministers most familiar with the public business and most distinguished for disinterestedness, should draw up the first lists, and the persons named on these should, in turn, designate one thousand other citizens able to contribute each five hundred ducats." (*Ibid.*, pp. 63, 64.)

Down that steep incline the Spanish monarchy continued to descend, sometimes with a fearfully accelerated speed, sometimes with less velocity; but it descended slowly and surely, at the best of times, till the calamitous administration of Godoy invited the ambition of Napoleon. Utterly unprepared as was the Spanish nation to resist and repel the Corsican's veteran and victorious armies, we know what virtues were then displayed by all classes, and how glorious a share the Spanish clergy of every degree had in the long, heroic struggle against the invader.

The sacrileges, the spoliations, the robberies previously committed in Italy and all over Continental Europe by the inundating French armies were renewed with aggravating circumstances throughout the Iberian peninsula. The treasures of gold and silver and precious vestments carried away by the Imperial troops and their generals, as well as the priceless masterpieces of Spanish art, constituted, comparatively, a trifling loss. The irreparable loss was in the confiscation of ecclesiastical property and revenues, in the suppression of the Religious Orders; in the confusion caused in the time-honored relations between the Church and the Government, between the religious guides of the nation and all classes of their flocks. The Church of Spain, ever since the short-lived but disastrous Napoleonic domination, may most aptly be compared to the fertile and lovely regions around Verona desolated by the inundations of the last two years. The soil in this classic region of Northern Italy was naturally fruitful; as all travellers know, the intelligent husbandry of a most laborious and frugal people had increased its fertility to the utmost. It was, or seemed to be, a paradise of delight when the destroying waters were let loose upon it. The most deplorable result of this calamity was not that villages were swept away; that the fair hopes of the harvest were ruined; that the herds perished, and with them, in many instances, both the herdsman and the owner. What cannot be remedied by man's utmost industry, or by the exertions of any government, is the ruin of the soil itself. The land far and wide is covered with a bed of stones and gravel so thick that no labor can remove it. Nothing will ever grow there save weeds and brambles!

The property and revenues of the Spanish clergy, though sadly diminished and frequently alienated almost in their totality by the sovereigns of the Hapsburg and Bourbon dynasties, were still guaranteed by the Constitution, under the safeguard of laws which went back to the reign of the Visigoths. Most of this property had been won from Moor and Arab in the heroic struggles in which priest and prelate had been the leaders of the nation, the inspirers of the popular faith and enthusiasm. Napoleon swept all that away; and the grudging good-will of the best subsequent administrations has been as ineffectual in restoring a decent independence to the nineteen-twentieths of the Spanish clergy as have been the efforts of the Veronese country-folk to remove from the fields once waving with golden grain the ten, twenty, or thirty feet of gravel left there by the pitiless flood. Since Ferdinand VII. to Alfonso XII. the great mass of the Spanish priesthood have had to subsist on twenty-five cents a day, and that wretched pittance is not always regularly paid!

Men of the world who will read this statement, and take in at a glance all the hardship of the situation, will say at once that to reduce to such abject poverty any class in the community, is to degrade its members, to take away from them not only their independence and their manhood, but their own self-respect and the respect of their fellow-men. Besides, things among the Spanish clergy are far from being, in very many respects, what they are among their American brethren. The beneficed clergy—and they form quite a large minority—live in their families, their less favored assistants and inferiors being also compelled to live in theirs. Whatever may be the merit of the poor assistant, obliged to live on twenty-five cents a day, the sacredness of his ministrations and the honor and reverence due to his character cannot add much to the scanty fare which twenty-five cents may purchase for an entire household, or to the comforts indispensable to the lowliest and the poorest. How few, alas! are the comforts and how insufficient the fare in so many of these, need not to be told here. Thank God! our own parochial clergy are otherwise provided for: pastor and assistants reside under the same roof, and the household expenses are paid out of the common perquisites, the modest salary of either pastor or assistant going to supply his own personal wants, to meet his charities, to buy books, and purchase raiment. In many of our poor missions the resident clergy have a hard battle to fight with the necessities of their situation. But they can ever rely on the rich poverty of a generous-hearted people, who honor themselves in honoring the ministers of religion, and are willing to share with their guides and teachers the last dollar and the last loaf. And, then, it is no sneering officer of the state who

doles out here to God's priest what government deems sufficient to keep body and soul together.

We, here in the United States, do not and cannot conceive what it is for a priest to live in a country where the people have never been accustomed for generations to support their clergy, and to create out of their own resources what is necessary to the maintenance of religion,—the church edifice, the school, the hospital, and all the institutions of education and beneficence. Imagine how much, among rural populations like those of Galicia, for instance, the most devoted and generous tenant-farmer can give to his parish priest and his assistants in addition to the wretched government stipend. In Spain, every farmer, like all other producers, pays one third of the value of his crop to the tax-gatherer, one-third to the landlord, and of the remaining third a large percentage goes to the city or commune when the farm-produce is brought to market. How is it possible to live on the rest? you will ask. Ah, there is the rub! And, then again, where is the possibility of being generous to church or priest? And yet these poor creatures, who never eat meat twice a year, and who live on corn-bread and a wretched substitute for soup, never refuse to share their poor meal with a poorer neighbor, or to help the priest and his charities with donations as blessed as the widow's mite.

But degrading to religion and its ministers as must be this abject poverty, coupled with the servitude toward the state which the Spanish legislation and practice impose on the poor priest like a yoke of adamant, there is another result of the French invasion which is even more hurtful to religion. This is the ridicule and contempt cast on the Church and the priesthood by the Voltairian philosophy of the eighteenth century, and so widely and powerfully used by the irreligious press established under the French rule, and which, like the upas tree, planted in a favorable soil, soon waxed strong, and grew, and overshadowed the land, poisoning the atmosphere of public opinion. In our own happy country, where reverence for religion and respect for holy things and for the sincere convictions of others seem inborn in all classes of the people, and where men who do not profess to belong themselves to any denomination will, nevertheless, show a deferential regard to the opinions of their neighbors, we can form no idea of the hatred and contempt of all religion with which Voltairianism has leavened so many generations of the upper and middle classes in France, Italy, and Spain. When the united arms of Wellington and the insurgent Spaniards drove the Gallic invaders across the Pyrenees, and Spain was left alone to reconstruct her social institutions, this sneering Voltairianism was left behind to poison the minds and hearts of the nation. In Voltaire's native country

ridicule was the destroyer's most potent weapon. He made all who could read his witty and obscene blasphemies laugh unceasingly at what their fathers had adored and revered; and then came the day when, under the leadership of Voltairian *avocats*, the famishing French masses arose and made a hell of the kingdom of St. Louis. That the French episcopacy and priesthood were not deserving of the contempt lavished on them by the contemporary skepticism, their invincible fidelity to conscience and their unparalleled constancy in suffering have proved beyond dispute. Still the blood shed in torrents by the *avocats* assembled in convention and the horrors and sacrileges committed by the masses under their guidance, did not permit that they or their children after them should love religion or its ministers. It is the man who is wronged that will be the first to forgive the evil-doer and to extend to him a helpful hand in his need. The evil-doer seldom, if ever, forgives his victim, and his hatred of him and his will be commensurate with the greatness of the wrong done them.

In Spain the very seriousness and dignity of the national character, while allowing the ridicule cast on religion by Voltaire to have its natural influence on men's minds, superadded to the contempt thereby begotten, that hearty hatred of the priest which is, at the present day, a characteristic of the manhood of Spain. This renders the situation almost hopeless. Not even the extreme radical press of France or Italy is more bitterly hostile to Christianity than the liberal and irreligious journals of Spain. Even the most rabid of the Madrid "dailies" observe toward religion and its ministers certain forms of respect which are entirely cast aside by the provincial papers. The radical journals of Seville, for instance, rival in violence *La Riforma*, of Rome; and the miserable little *Concordia*, of Vigo, makes up in satanic malice for what it lacks in size and ability. Indeed, in the Peninsula, for one paper that is professedly religious or treats religion with deference, there are at least ten which hold up its doctrines, its institutions, its priesthood to the hatred and ridicule of their readers. This education given to Spaniards by the majority of the press is furthered by the teaching of the universities and other public schools, as well as by the energetic and widespread propaganda exercised by the Socialist and Anarchist societies.

Most well-informed non-Catholics consider the political relations of the Church in Spain toward the government and the nation to be those of a body most privileged and favored. Even to Catholics who read the letter of existing concordats, the position of the Spanish Church would seem to be one of exclusive privilege. Indeed, the last Concordat, that of 1851, is more explicit than any of the preceding on this point: "The Roman Catholic and Apos-

tolic religion, which, to the exclusion of every other form of worship, continues to be the sole religion of the Spanish nation, shall be always upheld in the dominions of Her Catholic Majesty, together with all the rights and prerogatives that belong to it according to the Divine Law and the sacred canons."

Such is the letter of Article I. of the Concordat concluded between Pius IX. and Isabella II. In conformity with this fundamental declaration, Article II. guarantees that "the teaching in the universities, colleges, seminaries, and all public and private schools shall be, in its totality, conformable to the doctrine of the same Catholic religion, and that, in furtherance of this purpose, no obstacles shall be opposed to bishops and other diocesan prelates bound by their functions to watch over the purity of doctrine, the morality of the scholars, and the religious training of youth whenever they fulfil this duty, even in the public schools."

But, like the concordats concluded with Philip V., in 1737, and with Ferdinand VI., in 1753, that signed by Isabella II. was only used by the government to rivet more firmly on the necks of the clergy the intolerable yoke imposed first by Charles V. and the other sovereigns of his dynasty, and made still heavier by Philip V. and the other Bourbon kings. The sole object of Philip, on ascending the Spanish throne, was to naturalize in the peninsula the autocracy in temporals and spirituals practiced by his grandfather, Louis XIV., in France.

If the Austrian dynasty had ruled the people and clergy of Spain with a rod of iron, Philip V. and the Bourbons scourged them with scorpions. The grandson and disciple of the man who was wont to say, *l'état c'est moi*, soon made the Court of Rome and the Spanish nation feel that he knew how to improve on his worthy ancestor's maxims and methods of political government and ecclesiastical administration. The Concordat of 1737 put an end, for the time being, to what was virtually a state of schism; but, by leaving the King free to nominate to all the episcopal sees and benefices of his kingdom, by allowing him to regulate according to his own will the revenues of all ecclesiastical property, the Pope prevented the consummation of a formal and final rupture. The universal *jus patronatus* claimed by the Spanish sovereigns and tacitly conceded to Philip V., was explicitly acknowledged by Benedict XIV. in the Concordat of 1753. It was a hopeless struggle, that maintained for ages by the Holy See against the absolutism and greed of princes bent on reducing the Church within their dominions to a state establishment solely dependent on themselves, and bent, as well, on considering all church property and revenues as a part of the public domain, of which the king was, by right, the original owner, *dueño de vida y hacienda*.

The liberty and property of the Spanish Church, in spite of the solemn stipulations of concordat after concordat, were more than ever at the mercy of the government during the century which elapsed from 1737 to 1837. The suppression of the Jesuits, the sequestration of their property, the arbitrary and cruel disposal of their liberty and their lives both within the Peninsula and within the vast colonial empire of Spain, afford an instance—unique in the history of Christian civilization—of the abject helplessness to which a long course of despotism had reduced a proud and once powerful nation. Alfonso the Learned, the son and successor of the great St. Ferdinand, says, in one of his laws, accepted as fundamental by the national Cortes: "The people should prevent the king's doing, of his own act, anything which may prove hurtful to the kingdom, and this opposition should consist first in counselling him to the contrary, and then in withstanding all who urge him to the wrong course. Thereby the people do what befitteth good and faithful subjects, inasmuch as it would be acting the part of traitors to let the king persist in such evil courses as would draw on him contempt."

Such was the spirit of the ancient legislation—of the thirteenth century monarchy. No one of the constituted authorities or of the great bodies of the state ventured to resist or protest when Charles III., without deigning to consult the Holy See or to cover his tyrannical conduct with the veil of judicial forms, on the same day and at the same hour, in both hemispheres, seized the thousands of Jesuits in his dominions and disposed of them as absolutely as if they were his bond-slaves, solely dependent on his will for their freedom—their very existence.

The revolutionary governments that have successively ruled Spain within the last half-century have not shown themselves more careful of the rights of the subject or of the liberties of the Church than the despots of a hundred years ago. We know how the ministers of the Queen-Regent Maria Cristina dealt with the Church, with the imprescriptible rights of the Holy See, trampling under foot the most sacred engagements, the constitutional rights of whole bodies of citizens, and repeating, without reasonable pretext or a shadow of justification, the worst crimes and most unpardonable blunders of the great French Revolution.

Did the political situation of the Church in Spain improve after the Concordat of 1851? Did the clergy derive any further security from such solemn declarations as those contained in the passages above quoted? The very nature of the various governments which, in our own days, have rapidly succeeded each other in Spain, forbids our thinking so for a moment. They resemble those summer resorts built on the sandy shores of Long Island, fair to

the eye and overflowing with the tide of the pleasure-loving or health-seeking so long as the brief season lasts, then deserted by the crowd and swept out of existence by some fearful winter storm.

Spain, like France and Italy, is governed by the councils of the Masonic societies, half in league with Socialists, Communists, and Anarchists. What favor or security can the Catholic Church, can religion of any kind, expect from men who look upon the former as the great obstacle to progress, and upon any form of religious belief and worship as an enemy to be removed at every cost?

Amedeo of Savoy gave up the crown of Spain because he could not hold it without becoming the passive tool of the men who had drawn up the Constitution of 1869, which set aside the Concordat and inaugurated in Spain the worst features of French university teaching, severing the connection between Church and State, only to make the former the bond-servant of the latter.

When the Liberal-Conservatives under Canovas de Castillo recalled from exile the son of Isabella II. and placed him on the throne, the new Constitution, proclaimed on June 30th, 1876, declared, in Article XI., that

"The Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Religion is that of the State. The nation binds itself to support divine worship and its ministers.

"No one shall be molested on Spanish territory on account of religious opinions, nor on account of the exercise of one's respective worship, save always the reverence due to Christian morality.

"Nevertheless, no other ceremonies or public manifestations than those of the State Religion shall be tolerated."

This was a wide departure from the Concordat of 1851, and the scientific vagueness of the language permitted the toleration here extended to "religious opinions" to be interpreted in a very wide sense. The Catholic religion was not altogether set aside as the only acknowledged form of national faith and worship, because the numerical majority of the nation still clung to the Church of their fathers, and because Don Carlos, who counted so many adherents in the northern provinces, would then be hailed as the true King and political saviour of Catholic Spain.

But the political situation of the Spanish Church and its clergy is none the less uncertain, insecure, and dependent on the goodwill or caprice of the ministry in power, of the army of officials, civil and military, who are left free to misgovern, to oppress, and to annoy.

One would think, on reading in Article II. of the Concordat of 1851, the words guaranteeing to the diocesan authorities such unlimited freedom in visiting the universities and schools of the

kingdom, that every precaution had been taken therein to secure youth against irreligious teaching and bad morals. It is one of the vital points on which the Church never can surrender her right of superintendence. Well, so bitter was the feeling shown by the Liberal (?) press, as well as by government followers inside and outside of Parliament, that a royal decree of March 23d, 1853, enjoined on the episcopal authorities to limit, during the official visitation of their flocks, their inspection of educational establishments "to *primary* schools alone, making known to the government the defects observed by them, ... without forming themselves any resolution thereon"!

Moreover, and in view of the invincible repugnance which the majority of men in Spain, the educated classes especially, manifest toward clerical interference in education, the government of Alfonso XII., by a royal decree of February 24th, 1876, declared that "the reverend bishops have, each in his own diocese, the superior direction and inspection of the instruction given to girls in religious communities, without, however, trenching in any way on the right of inspection belonging to the government. . . . . "

The obvious result of the restraints thus placed on the action of the bishops was to increase the boldness of the skeptical and irreligious teachers. Things came to such a pass that, on October 23d, 1876, another royal decree was issued forbidding, in all government schools, the teaching of any doctrine hostile to that of the Catholic Church.

Of the utter futility of such prohibitions in face of a public opinion as anti-Catholic and anti-Christian as ever pervaded the schools of the French University, one may be reasonably assured without having long sojourned in Spain. Six months spent in Seville, with every opportunity of observing closely the nature and tendencies of the teaching there given in the public schools, have convinced me that concordats and royal decrees have no more power to stay the triumphant progress of infidel teaching than "shovelling the wind" can arrest the course of a hurricane.

The Jesuits had opened, in one of the ancient palaces of the city, and under the direction of Father Velez, a pupil of the great seminary of Woodstock, Md., a school in every way admirable. It was a modest establishment, hidden away in a narrow and obscure street. But Catholic parents had soon found it out. Meanwhile, the official university courses were held in the former magnificent College of the Jesuits, one of the many creations of St. Francis Borgia. In the last week of April, 1882, the Catholic young men of Seville, together with deputations of their fellows, having dared to celebrate the centenary of the death of Murillo by marching through the streets of Seville and depositing a crown

at the foot of a statue of the great painter before the Academy of Fine Arts, were there assailed by the University students, ill treated, and dispersed. The rioting continued all day and all night; peace being only restored by the Jesuits abandoning their college in Seville and retiring to the neighborhood of Malaga.

So much for free Catholic education in Spain, as guaranteed by the last concordat, and further secured by royal decrees and legislative enactments. As we have said, these are but feeble safeguards in a country where institutions have no hold on the confidence of the people, and where perpetual change has accustomed all classes to be law-breakers with impunity, instead of law-abiding.

To be sure, the highest dignitaries in the Church are, by their office, members of the legislature. But their presence, their eloquence, and their influence are as ineffectual to secure good laws or to prevent the passing of bad ones as the authority of the remotest Galician village rector is to control the civil and military governors of his province, or even to moderate the intolerable tyranny of the local alcalde and commander of the *carabineros*.

It may be safely said that the political *status* granted in Spain to religion and its ministers, very limited and precarious as it is, is still the result, not of the deep reverence arising from the conscientious belief of the legislators, but of the wholesome fear of Carlism, backed by the indomitable courage of the believing and liberty-loving Basques, Navarrese, and Aragonese. The last remnant of former privilege, the feeble shadow of religious liberty still left to the clergy of Spain is due not to existing concordats or constitutions, but to administrative policy, founded on the attachment still felt by the masses for the religion of Leander and Isidore, of Fernan Gonzalez and the Cid Campeador, of the heroic Pelagio and the no less heroic St. Ferdinand.

As to the *social status* of the Church and her clergy in the peninsula, I had rather not write at length.

What is said in the first pages of this paper about the incredible oppression, wastefulness, and spoliations of the Austrian and Bourbon dynasties in Spain, crowned by the wholesale robberies of Napoleon, and by the unjustifiable confiscations of Maria Cristina and her daughter, explains the irremediable poverty and hopeless degradation of the lower clergy, as well as of the few remaining representatives of the ancient monastic orders in the peninsula. Every intelligent and thoughtful reader can easily gather from the picture I have outlined only in part and very faintly, what must be the social condition of men and women, consecrated by their profession to the service of God, the highest and holiest of ministries, *and made dependent on the state for a pittance barely sufficient to keep them from starving*.

To be sure, we are reminded by the spoiler that Faith was never so powerful over the lives of its professors as when it celebrated the Divine Mysteries in the obscurity of the Catacombs; that its ministers were never more honored or more powerful for good than when, like St. Paul amid the learning of Athens and the splendid luxury of Corinth, they obtained by manual labor what supported themselves and their companions in the apostleship. We know as well that the religious guides of the New England and the Maryland Pilgrims were never more dear to their followers than when they shared with these the poverty of the first log-huts built on the shores of the Potomac and of Massachusetts Bay; that the piety of both preacher and hearer never sent up to heaven a brighter flame than when they worshipped together beneath the rafters of the first rude temple erected in the wilderness. But our Pilgrim forefathers were not always destined to live in log-cabins and to worship in these naked and unsightly structures. These struggling colonies were destined to become great civilized communities; and each community, as it rose higher and higher, lifted up with itself into new wants and new forms of culture, comfort, and splendor, religion and its ministers, and the public worship religion enjoined.

When Christianity, under Constantine and under Theodosius the Great, embraced the social classes of the entire civilized world, Religion could no longer be domiciled in the Catacombs; nor would the great Christian communities in the East and West permit the priest or the bishop to earn his bread by manual labor. Narrow indeed must be the intellect which does not perceive how new necessities and a new law of life grow out of a total change of circumstances.

It is a cruel derision, when you have robbed a swarm of wild bees of the honey they have been gathering up for generations in the depths of the forest, and destroyed all the winged toilers but the few absent from the hive, to say that these will soon build up another hive. What is to keep even these few from starvation during the long winter months and till the flowers of springtide invite once more their labor and industry?

Was not each monastery in the beginning a bee-hive, sending forth swarms of indefatigable toilers far and wide? And was not the late monastic pile, with its wealth of manuscripts, of books, of painting, and sculpture, with the broad and teeming lands that surrounded it, as much the fruit of associated religious labor as the stores of honey gathered by the bee? And had the monks no more rights than the insects? Are they no more deserving of pity from us who enjoy the treasures accumulated by their centuries of toil?

People who have read with delight the history of the colonization of Iceland, and who have enjoyed, like the writer of these lines, the rare, rich treasures of Icelandic literature, will not be likely to look with contempt on the present generation of Icelanders, suffering the extremes of poverty and famine, brought on by the terrible climate and the perpetual convulsions of the soil beneath them.

Not more violent, more desolating, or more unceasing than the terrible upheavals of Hecla and its sister volcanoes have been the social and political convulsions which have visited unhappy Spain. English eye-witnesses have told the world the story of the ruin there caused by French Jacobinism and Napoleonic ambition. Their joint action left the clergy poor enough to satisfy the worst enemies of clericalism. The revolutions which followed are, every one of them, like that of 1793 in France, the lawful offspring of Voltairianism,—a fruitful seed of social calamity sown by the Bourbons on both sides of the Pyrenees.

As these lines are written, the telegraph informs us that Spain is experiencing the first throes of another upheaval. The joint forces marshalled under the leadership of Serrano and Moret have been unable to drive from power the fusionist ministry of Sagasta. The secret societies which are behind them, and which represent also the Republicans and Radicals of Castelar and Ruiz Zorilla, are essaying their power in local risings. They pretend to want the republican Constitution of 1869. We may be sure they will not be content till they have radically changed the public institutions of Spain. They want neither King nor Church.

The Spanish clergy have, therefore, a fearful outlook before them. We should extend to them a warm, generous, and brotherly sympathy. The danger for them is—as for the clergy of Italy before 1859–70, and for the French clergy before the advent of Paul Bert—that they should remain unconscious of the magnitude and nearness of the coming earthquake. This one thing, however, is certain, that from out these mighty throes which seem to threaten the very foundations of the earth, GOD will cause to spring the liberty of His Church.

WHO WROTE THE "IMITATION OF CHRIST"?

L'Auteur de l'Imitation et les Documents Néelandais, par Victor Becker, S. J. La Haye, 1882.

Controversia Gersoniana, by C. Mella, S. J. Civiltà Cattolica, 1875.

I Diritti di Tommaso da Kempis diffesi contro le vecchie pretese de' Gersenisti moderni. Revmo. P. Luigi Santini. Roma, 1879, 1881.

AFTER the Gospel, the *Imitation* undoubtedly is the book that reflects with the greatest perfection the light which Jesus Christ brought us down from heaven. It eminently contains the Christian philosophy. Humility, poverty, meekness, purity of heart, sorrow for sins, forgiveness of injury, joy in the midst of persecution, were held by the Saviour, in the sermon on the mount, as the characteristics of His disciples. Nowhere else do we find the same doctrine inculcated with a more persuasive eloquence and simplicity than in the unpretending little volume that all of us have a hundred times perused.

Nothing certainly is more opposed to our corrupt nature; still all, even non-Christians, have admired and praised the book. Filled with the spirit of Christianity it is most uncongenial to the *animalis homo;* still not a single voice has ever dared to protest against it,—precisely as in our day the men least inclined to submit to the Saviour are often the loudest in professing their admiration for his moral precepts. Such is at all times the power of true virtue!

Hence, after the Bible, and particularly the New Testament, the editions of the *Imitation* have been far more numerous than those of the noblest productions of the human mind. Not only the MSS. of the Latin text, written before the discovery of printing, are counted by hundreds; but the printed editions, since the middle of the fifteenth century, almost defy calculation. And they are not limited to the Latin text, because it has been translated, in prose and verse, into all the languages of Europe,—nay, into a great number of the tongues of Asia and Africa, besides a few of the Western continent.

Moreover, the commentaries and treatises suggested by the text bear testimony, by their great number, to the estimation it has always enjoyed. The books and pamphlets also published on the question of authorship alone amount, in the opinion of Mr. Edmund Watherton, to about three hundred volumes,—a wonderful fact, considering the small importance of such questions in ordinary cases.

These assertions, which could be considerably increased in number, are not mere guesses and wild approximations. The modern

Bollandist, Fr. Aloys de Backer, has given the most accurate details on the subject in his remarkable *Essai Bibliographique sur le livre De Imitatione Christi.* A folio volume was required for publishing this extraordinary catalogue; and the collection of these books, if complete, would form a large library.

Still, for the last two hundred years and more, a violent controversy has arisen and continues at this moment in the literary world on the simple question, Who wrote the *Imitation of Christ?* It is after all an unimportant question, because the high value of the book is altogether independent of the name of its author. Still, since in recent times nearly all Catholic reviews have spoken of it in one sense or another, and several non-Catholic periodicals of note have published important articles on it; since, moreover, new documents and MSS. have been quite lately found out, it seems proper that the readers of the AMERICAN CATHOLIC QUARTERLY REVIEW should also receive some exact information on this side of the Atlantic, and know at least the latest aspect of the controversy.

The primary cause of this conflict of opinion was undoubtedly the modesty of the author, and his determination to remain unknown. *Ama nesciri et pro nihilo reputari* was one of the maxims he practiced before inculcating it on others. Accordingly it is worthy of remark that the oldest MSS. did not put forward any name whatever; and it is only from the middle of the fifteenth century that a change was made, and different names of authors appeared in a quite unaccountable manner, namely, those of St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, Ludolph the Carthusian, Gerson the chancellor of the Paris University, and many others. In an uncritical age a claim of this nature was often decided by the whim of the copyist, what he thought the most probable opinion.

In course of time two names alone remained prominent, those of Thomas à Kempis and of Gerson. The French inclined for Gerson; the remainder of the world proclaimed Thomas à Kempis. This last opinion was almost universal at the end of the sixteenth century; and, as late as 1657, Mabillon acknowledged that he—Thomas—"still enjoyed the *fiduciary possession* that had been granted him from early times." Though the claim of Gerson is now nearly abandoned—the reasons for it will soon be briefly stated—it is proper to insist on the fact that, long before the contestation of the seventeenth century, he had many advocates in opposition to Thomas à Kempis. Old MSS. are found with his name inscribed as the author; and it is not true that "Charles Labbé, charged by Cardinal Richelieu to examine into the question, ... *proposed* another claimant for the honors of the hotly-contested authorship

in the person of John Charlier de Gerson, Chancellor of Paris." Labbé only *revived* the title of the chancellor, that was then nearly extinct, as it is to-day. But, after the testimony of Mabillon, confirmed by that of his *confrère*, Thuillier, it must be considered certain that, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Thomas à Kempis was universally recognized as the author of the *Imitation*. How did a *new* name come later to light in the controversy, and on what grounds could this unexpected claim be sustained? This is the first subject of inquiry.

I.

In 1604, Fr. Rossignoli, a Jesuit, found in the house of his order, at Arona, near Milan, a MS. of the *Imitation*, in which the author was called *Abbas Johannes Gersen*, *Gessen*, or *Gesen;* these three forms were unaccountably written in the same subscription. That religious house at Arona had formerly belonged to the Benedictines, and Rossignoli concluded that Gersen had been a Benedictine abbot. He was congratulated on his discovery by Bellarmine, who mentioned it as an acceptable solution in his work, *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*.

But the celebrated Father Rosweyde, of Antwerp, declared himself directly against this opinion, "because," he said, "the claims of Thomas à Kempis were too well established to be in the least shaken by the new discovery." Moreover, Father Maggioli, of the same Society of Jesus, protested that "he himself had brought that identical MS. from his own father's house in Genoa, during the year 1579." The Benedictines, who had left Arona long before, could not have had the MS. in their possession, and the conclusion of Rossignoli that Gersen must have been a Benedictine abbot was altogether unwarranted. Bellarmine, better informed, and having received letters from Rosweyde, changed sides again, and in the following editions of the *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, he went back to the advocacy of Thomas à Kempis.

But the existence of this MS. had already come to the knowledge of Dom Constantine Caietani, a Benedictine of renown, whom Pope Paul V. had made his secretary. A man of great erudition, he was, however, known to his contemporaries for a peculiar mania he had of claiming for his order nearly all great churchmen of former ages. Not only Pope St. Gregory I., but St. Francis of Assisium, St. Thomas Aquinas, and a multitude of other great men had been, in his opinion, Benedictines, though everybody else knew the contrary.

St. Ignatius Loyola, likewise, had been, he said, a novice in a monastery of St. Benedict, and his celebrated *Book of Exercises*

was but an open plagiarism, being simply a reprint of the *Exercitatorium Spirituale* of Garcia de Cisneros, O. S. B.

The discovery of Rossignoli, consequently, was a godsend to Caietani. He managed to obtain the loan of the MS., and published it at the same time at Rome and Paris, in 1616. But the conclusions he drew from the simple title were, in truth, astounding. Abbot Gersen, or Gessen, had been a Benedictine; the MS. had been written by his hand or at his dictation; he himself belonged to a noble family of the name of Gessen or De Gessate (quite common in Gessa), whose residence near the Benedictine monastery of St. Peter yet bore the name of the newly-discovered abbot. He did not speak of the age of the MS.; there was no date to it.

None of these assertions could ever be proved, but they were boldly affirmed by Caietani, and soon many believed them among the Italians, who felt flattered by this new illustration of their noble country.

Fr. H. Rosweyde, a few months later, published his *Vindiciæ Campenses* at Antwerp, in which he refuted the arguments of Caietani, and directly the contest assumed vast proportions and has been since carried on with great vigor on both sides. The chief cause of the conflict lay in this, that Thomas à Kempis was a canon regular of St. Augustine, and Gersen, or Gessen, was said to have been a Benedictine abbot. The Augustinians and the Benedictines were naturally desirous of the success of their champions, and on both sides proofs, or at least probabilities, were eagerly canvassed and discussed with all the subtlety natural to interested combatants.

The first question which naturally comes to the mind is the personality itself of the supposed authors. Who was Thomas à Kempis and who was Gersen? The answer to the first question has always been simple, clear, convincing; the biography of Thomas was, in course of time, as solidly established as any historical fact can be. This will be examined later on. The case was wholly different with regard to the personality of Gersen. The first attempt by Caietani to give it life was a failure. He had substituted conjectures for facts. MSS. and old records might, perhaps, furnish more reliable information, and the Benedictines have always, since that time, been ready to furnish the treasures of their erudition in furthering the cause of Gersen. They did so heartily on this occasion.

In 1501 Sessa printed, at Venice, the four books of the *Imitation*, under the name of *Johannes Gerson, Chancellor of Paris.* (It is known that the name of this celebrated writer, who, in the sixteenth century, was thought by many to be the author of the book, was

spelt in half a dozen different ways—Gerson, Gersen, Gersenia, Gorson, etc.) A copy of that edition, when the contest arose, was found at Genoa, with the following note: "*Hunc librum non compilavit Johannes Gerson, Sed D. Johannes. . . . Abbas Vercellensis, ut habetur usque hodie propria manu scriptus in eadem abbatia.*" Caietani found in this note another clue to the biography of his champion. Though the copy itself attributed it to J. Gersen, *Chancellor of Paris*, Caietani contended from the note that the real author, J. Gersen, had been abbot at Vercelli, and in order to be more precise, as there had been two Benedictine abbeys in that city—St. Stephen's and St. Andrew's—Gersen had been abbot of St. Stephen's. Unfortunately this monastery was destroyed in 1580, and the name of Gersen could not any more be seen, *hodie propria manu scriptus*, etc.

The contestation over this copy of the *Imitation* has now lasted two hundred and fifty years, and an impartial reader must now conclude that if it supports any claim it must be that of Gerson of Paris, now abandoned. Moreover, it has been proved recently that the celebrated note is a fraud. It contains a name that has been erased so as to render the sentence illegible. This argument of the Gersenists falls to the ground, if it does not turn against them.

Still it is out of this note that the greatest part of the biography of Gersen has been evolved by his partisans, led by Caietani. Gersen was not only, according to them, a Benedictine abbot but the author of the *Imitation*. His monastery was that of St. Stephen, at Vercelli. The university of that city enjoyed a great renown during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,—an undeniable fact,—but it was not so well ascertained that Gersen "had been a professor in that university," as Caietani pretended, and that by means of the young men who flocked to it from all parts of Europe, he could send copies of the book north, west, and south. The chief proof the Gersenists gave of it was that "a great number of MSS. of the *Imitation* have been *ascertained* to belong to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries." In case this were true, Thomas à Kempis's claim would be futile, since he was born at the end of the fourteenth century, and he did not publish any work before the beginning of the fifteenth. This was the strong position of the Gersenists.

But none of these assertions can any more, at this moment, be maintained. From the middle of the seventeenth century to a recent epoch there were *doubts* with regard to the existence of the *Imitation* prior to the fifteenth. Had it not been for these *doubts* such men as Mabillon, Thuillier, Monfaucon, and their brethren of the Order of St. Benedict would not have enlisted themselves

under the banner of Gersen, Abbot of Vercelli. The cause of their steadfastness in their opinion lay in the considerable number of MSS. which, from their ordinary rules of criticism, they judged older than the time of Thomas à Kempis. On this question of paleography, consequently, rests the only real difficulty of the case. We shall come back to it as we proceed in this discussion.

It would be tedious, and it is impossible in this short paper, to describe the intricacies of the controversy which then became universal throughout Christendom. Mr. Ed. Watherton has done it in his paper of June 12th, 1880, published in the London *Tablet*. He proves that every new attempt of the partisans of Gersen was successfully met by those of Thomas à Kempis. Thus, in 1630, Walgrave, O. S. B., was answered by Fronteau, Simon Werlin, and Thomas Carr.

In 1650 the Parliament of Paris was applied to by the Gersenists on account of the insults, as they called them, levelled at Caietani and at the whole Order of St. Benedict by Naudé and other partisans of Thomas à Kempis. Parliament ordered that those insults, on both sides, should be withdrawn, but it "forbade the *Imitation* to be printed with the name of Gersen, and gave permission to the canons regular to print it with the name of Thomas à Kempis." Many champions of Thomas since the time of Rosweyde have enlightened the public on the subject. The chief among them were Philip Chifflet, Abbé de Balerne, Fronteau, an Augustinian, G. Heser, S. J., and F. Raynaud, of the same society.

In 1671 the Gersenists again applied to Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, for permission to call a meeting of learned men, who should decide if the MSS. on which rested the cause of Gersen had been tampered with. Thirteen MSS. were brought forward, which were pronounced intact. Mabillon, one of the Benedictines present, gave his opinion that some of them belonged to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This question will be directly attended to.

In 1724 Thomas A. Erhard, O. S. B., revived the contest, and the year following Eusebius Amort published his *Plena et Succincta Informatio*—a powerful work in favor of Thomas. It was followed, in 1728, by his *Scutum Kempense*, and later by his *Deductio Critica*, followed, in 1764, by his *Moralis Certitudo*. The case appeared decided in favor of Thomas à Kempis.

Finally, in this century, the discovery of the *Codex de Advocatis* by M. de Grégory produced the last phase of contention. This must be kept for future consideration.

II.

The first important point to be examined is the opinion of Mabillon and other learned Benedictines that several MSS. of the *Imita-*

tion still extant belong to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This being well ascertained, the cause of Thomas would be hopeless; but that of Gersen would still remain doubtful. A great many MSS., particularly from Benedictine monasteries, were brought to Paris in 1671, and attentively examined by the best living paleographers. Among thirteen of them, several were pronounced to belong to the thirteenth or, at least, fourteenth century. Can such a decision be considered irrefragable? Much has been said on both sides of this question. The reflections of Father Victor Becker, S. J., in his *L'Auteur de l'Imitation et les Documents Néerlandais*, appear reasonable—nay, conclusive. He says: "Do you ask a truly competent man if a MS. without date," as they all were, "*can* belong to a certain epoch? He will be able to give a categorical answer. He will have only to examine if there is nothing in it incompatible with the usages of that epoch; if, for instance, there are no forms of letters or ciphers belonging to a different one. In this case he will say it *can* belong to it. But should you ask further if it *does* actually belong to it, he will have to qualify his answer and submit his judgment to the rules of approximation, because such a question cannot be solved in an absolute manner, and the best paleographers are often deceived. Experience shows that unless his limits as to time are very large, you are not bound to follow his judgment. It will give you only a certain measure of probability. In case there is against it a positive historical evidence the verdict of paleography is altogether valueless. Most competent men have occasionally fallen into errors involving periods of one or two hundred years." Father Becker quotes here a case in point, given *in extenso* by Dr. Acquoy in the London *Spectator*. Hoffman von Fullersleben, at the request of Professor Moll, undertook to decide on the age of a MS. offered him by the Professor. He insisted on the exactness of his decision, after objections had been made, and yet was obliged, in the end, to admit that he had made a mistake of two hundred years. Dr. Spitzen, of Zwolle, has lately proved beyond contradiction that not a word of evidence in favor of Gersen belongs to a period anterior to the fifteenth century, and, moreover, that not a single MS. of the *Imitation* can be with certainty assigned to the thirteenth or fourteenth. More shall be said of Dr. Spitzen.

This he demonstrated in particular with regard to the celebrated *Codex de Advocatis*, which Mgr. Malou, of Bruges, and other recent writers had already before discussed and disproved. M. de Grégory, a Piedmontese, living at Paris, discovered this *Codex* in 1830. It became immediately the cause of a violent outbreak of the old controversy. The MS. itself, being without date and giving no name of author, could not be of any weight in deciding the ques-

tion; but M. de Grégory, whose bias for Gersen was already well known, entered into correspondence with some living members of the Avogadri family, to whom it was pretended the MS. had previously belonged. Hence the name *De Advocatis*, the Latin form of Avogadri.

Soon after, a *Diarium* was discovered among the papers of the family, stating that on February 11th, 1349, a precious *Codex de Imitatione Christi* had been given as a legacy from one brother to the other, and it was immediately averred that this *Codex* was the identical one purchased by M. de Grégory. On a more serious examination, M. Tourlet, of the "École des Chartes," declared that in the date 1349 the 3 might as well be a 5; and the Avogadri family, after ransacking their archives and all the parish registers, announced that not a single entry of births and deaths in the family could be found earlier than the seventeenth century. They believed, however, that their pedigree *could* be traced to 1400. M. Gence, besides, has collected the opinions of many distinguished paleographers to the effect that this *Codex* is not earlier than the commencement of printing.

The whole exposure of this great discovery of M. de Grégory can be read with advantage in the paper of Mr. Ed. Watherton, published in the *London Tablet* of June 12, 1880. The excess of zeal of Dom Caietani in the seventeenth century, and of M. de Grégory in the nineteenth, has more injured than helped the cause of Gersen; and, in particular, the *Codex de Advocatis* has been rendered not only valueless, but positively injurious to his claims, in the eyes of sensible men, by the frantic efforts of its great advocate since 1830, whose labors have all ended in smoke.

Beyond the authority of MSS. whose character is but doubtful, the external evidence is totally wanting on the side of the supposed abbot of Vercelli, since the existence of MSS. anterior to the fifteenth century is not proved. Nothing that he did or wrote, according to his partisans, can bear the light of criticism. It cannot be ascertained that any one ever spoke of him, or quoted the *Imitation* as a work of his, prior to 1400. The pretended texts of St. Bonaventure, containing passages of the *Imitation*, are now admitted to be the production of an unknown author of a later epoch. All the details of Gersen's biography, discussed with an apparent erudition by Dom Caietani and his followers on the same side of the controversy, are evidently spurious; and the assertion of Mgr. Malou, that "the abbot Gersen is a *myth*," seems to be the simple truth.

In the warm debates that took place in Paris in 1671, and the following years, the Gersenists boasted that they had on their side, if not the Parliament, at least the Congregations of Propaganda

and of the Index at Rome, and the deliberate opinion of Cardinal Richelieu. It is now proved that the Congregation of the Propaganda refused to interfere, and referred the petitioners to the Congregation of the Index. Quite recently the R. F. Luigi Santini, Superior-General of the Canons Regular of Lateran, applied to the R. Saccheri, the Secretary of the Congregation of the Index, to ascertain what had been its action at the time referred to, namely, the year 1639; the secretary answered that he had unsuccessfully gone through the records of the sessions of the court during that year. No decision had been taken on the subject. As to Cardinal Richelieu the only share he had in the discussion consisted in ordering that the magnificent edition of the *Imitation*, published at Paris, under his auspices, in 1640, should bear no name of author, as he considered that the question of authorship had not yet been decided. It was still doubtful in his eyes, and he took side with neither of the claimants.

At the end of this brief discussion of Gersen's title to the authorship of the *Imitation* a few words must be added on the claims of Gerson, the Chancellor of Paris. It was seen that, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a certain number of MSS. bore his name, which was then spelt in various ways,—Gerson, Gersenna, Gersen or Gersem, Garson, etc. It is now difficult to imagine why Gerson was considered the author by any one. The most probable opinion seems to be that his well-known work, *De Meditatione Cordis*, and several others of his ascetic treatises, were often *bound* together with the *Imitation*, or some of the four books of which it is composed; and several careless amanuenses attributed the whole compilation to the same author. But during his life—he died in 1429—and directly after his death, the *Imitation* was never mentioned in the list of his works. His own brother, the Prior of the *Célestins*, at Paris, being requested by a friend to give an authentic catalogue of them, did not include the *Imitation* in the list. This took place in 1423. A few months before the death of the chancellor, *Jacobus de Ceresio*, one of his intimate friends published another catalogue, which is found in the oldest printed editions of his *Opera Omnia*. The *Imitation* does not appear among them. In several of these early editions it is expressly attributed to Thomas à Kempis. At Lyons, where the chancellor died, the *Imitation* was printed in 1484, under the name of Thomas, and directly after, the treatise *De Meditatione Cordis* appeared with the name of Gersen,—that is, Gerson. This confusion of names—Gersen and Gerson—has been taken advantage of by some Gersenists to vindicate for their champion, John Gersen, Abbot of Vercelli, MSS. whose title-page was meant for supporting the cause of John Gerson, Chancellor of Paris. Father Becker points out in particular four docu-

ments in which the intended deception is but too apparent. This is, indeed, disreputable.

Meanwhile, the candidature of Gerson is now abandoned by all critics. M. Gence, of Paris, was the last man of note who stood for it, and, I think, he is now dead.

III.

The claims of Thomas à Kempis to the authorship of the *Imitation* cannot be sufficiently well understood, unless the Congregation of the Canons Regular of Windesheim, to which he belonged, is to some extent known. Most of the external and internal evidence in his favor is derived from peculiarities connected with this religious body—a branch of the Augustinians—which, I think, has now ceased to exist. It has left, however, an imperishable record, every word of it being clear, definite, and above contradiction. Its interior spirit, its action in the Church, its reformatory power over other Orders, its great men shining with a powerful individuality, though subdued by the most unaffected self-abasement, form one of the most edifying pages of our modern ecclesiastical annals. We possess still the works they wrote, the books they copied, the detailed chronicles of their Congregation, with all the marks of sincerity and truth.

Gerard Groot was the man destined by God himself to be the designer and first builder of the new edifice. After having taken his doctor's degree at the Sorbonne, and completed his post-graduate studies at the University of Prague, he became the most prominent man in Utrecht, his native city, and was loaded with church dignities and benefices. But, being stricken by sickness, he saw the vanity of even ecclesiastical honors, became a simple missionary, and began the work of reform in the Netherlands at the end of the fourteenth century. Witnessing with sorrow the decay of morality among people, churchmen, and monks, a burning zeal inflamed his heart. During the stay of the Popes at Avignon, disorders of every kind had sprung up, and were the forerunners of worse evils, such as disgraced the Church during the great schism that immediately followed. Groot flourished precisely under the pontificates of Gregory XI. and Urban VI.; and when he died, in 1384, the schism had been consummated.

Soon after beginning his missionary labors in the diocese of Utrecht, some difficulty with his diocesan induced him to retire to Deventer, and confine himself to the moral and Christian training of some young men whom he initiated into the "modern devotion," as he called it. Radewijns, a canon of Utrecht, his intimate friend, soon joined him, and proposed to introduce "common life" among the disciples of the new doctrine, who had so far lived in their own

families, and came daily to the house of Gerard Groot for instruction. Gerard consented to this advice with some reluctance, because he feared opposition from other religious communities, in case he showed himself bent on founding a new Order. To obviate the difficulty he discarded from his rule formal vows, but obliged his young men to keep the "evangelical counsels," without binding themselves by any solemn promise. Such was the origin of the "Brothers of Common Life."

This considerate action on the part of the good man did not prevent opposition. As soon as he saw the storm ready to burst he went to Groendael in Brabant, to consult another friend of his, —the celebrated John Ruysbroek, whose ascetic doctrine requires here a word of explanation. The then future Congregation of Windesheim received through Gerard Groot the mystic spirit of Ruysbroek, and the accusations of Gerson against him—Ruysbroek—must be briefly examined. The Chancellor of the University of Paris thought it his duty to censure his doctrine on "mental prayer," and brought forward propositions from his writings that appeared to favor the total absorption of the soul in God in the act of contemplation. When, under Gregory XV., in the seventeenth century, the process of the beatification of Ruysbroek was undertaken at the instance of Thomas of Jesus, this objection of Gerson was made a subject of inquiry, and it was proved that in some other of his writings, Ruysbroek had condemned a mystic sect of his time—the old *Beguins*—precisely for supporting the same opinion. Bellarmine meanwhile declared that the obvious meaning of the propositions objected to was irreproachable, and before him Denys the Carthusian and Albert Le Mire had said as much. The process of beatification, however, was not carried through, for the only reason that, though the meaning of the author was correct, others might take advantage of his expressions to teach a most dangerous error. Bossuet himself, later on, in his controversy with Fénelon, acknowledged the orthodoxy of Ruysbroek, "very different," he says, "from the 'modern quietists,' who endeavor to uphold their mysticism by his authority, though he has pronounced their condemnation."

To him Gerard Groot went for advice in his perplexity, and received for answer that the best way to quiet all opposition was to found a *new* congregation, but to adopt for its rules those of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine. His Order would be simply a branch of the Augustinians, and the members of other orders could not object to its novelty. The proper authority from Rome could be easily obtained.

Groot immediately assented to the advice of Ruysbroek, but soon after he died, and Radewijns found himself at the head of

the new undertaking. He must be considered the *de facto* founder of the new canons regular. In his intention, the "Brothers of the Common Life" should not be absorbed into them, but would continue to form a body apart, subordinate to the "canons," having, however, their own rules and scope.

The new superior founded, in 1387, the first convent of his congregation at Windesheim, six miles from Zwolle, in the province of Over-Yssell, Holland. Six "Brothers of the Common Life" had been previously subjected to some religious training among the monks of Emsteyn, near Utrecht, and they were the first inmates of the new convent. In course of time the house of Emsteyn, after having been the mother of Windesheim, was associated with it, and became its daughter. The Convent of Mount St. Agnes, near Zwolle, formerly a monastery of friars, adopted likewise the rules of Windesheim. In its walls Thomas à Kempis spent the greatest part of his life. Soon after, Groenendael and several other Belgian convents managed to be united with the "Windesheim Chapter." Scarcely thirty years after its foundation, the mother-house of the new congregation counted as many as forty-five houses—thirty-seven of men and eight of women—under its control.

These Canons Regular of St. Augustine had scarcely anything in common with the canons of cathedrals or collegiate churches. Groot himself and Radewijns had left their canonries of Utrecht, as the first step necessary on their part to embrace another life. Instead of a large revenue, of an ostentatious display in prelatic functions, of an easy individual mode of living, the canon of Windesheim was strictly a monk. He spent a great part of his day in the offices of the choir, and the remainder in copying manuscripts, teaching school to children or young men, spending hours in mental prayer, and giving only a short time to sleep. Humility and obedience was the primary rule of his conduct. Bodily austerities, fasting, inward mortification seldom gave place to self-indulgence of the most innocent kind. This happened only in the greatest festivals of the Church, when abstemiousness, silence, rigorous self-control, were not as strictly commanded as usual, and human nature, always allowed to play to some extent, was granted a higher degree of freedom under the wings of religion.

Details of this nature, of which the *Imitation of Christ* is full, give the best idea of this new asceticism. It was designed as an incentive to other religious bodies, so as to induce them to renew their fervor, nearly extinct at the end of the fourteenth century. There are great reasons to believe that, except among the Carthusians, the Cistercians, and Dominicans, regularity was the excep-

tion in religious houses during those dreary times of the great schism.

A large number of ascetic writers issued from the new cloisters and sanctuaries. But a peculiarity soon appeared in all of them, which was not pointed out except long after. The train of ideas, the style, some remarkable peculiarities of expression, characterized all the authors belonging to the Congregation of Windesheim, and in our day a powerful proof that Thomas à Kempis wrote the *Imitation* is derived from these special characteristics.

IV.

Thomas Hämerken was born at Kempen, near Cologne, in 1379. In 1395 he entered the school founded at Deventer by Florentius Radewijns; and consequently never knew Gerard Groot, who had died eleven years sooner. Some writers have pretended that he entered as a novice in 1375; and his profession not having taken place but six or seven years later, a sort of confusion was introduced into his biography which otherwise is as clear and precise as that of any of our contemporaries. Father Victor Becker, S. J., in the book quoted at the head of this paper, proves from Thomas himself that he entered as a *donatus* in 1399. He consequently did not take the habit at Deventer, but was only a pupil in the school of Radewijns. It is in 1406, on the day of *Corpus Christi*, as he himself relates, that he took the habit at Mount St. Agnes, where his elder brother, John, was prior; and he made his profession the year following. He was ordained priest in 1412 or 1413, and began directly to compose his ascetic treatises, among which the four books of the *Imitation* must now be counted. These were not written all at once as a systematic work. According to Mr. Edmund Watherton, the first book, *qui sequitur me*, was composed in 1414. The Kirksheim MS., still extant (copied from Thomas's original MS., written in 1425), bears the date of the same year,—1425. The Oxford *Codex* has also his name, and the date of 1438. The celebrated Antwerp *Codex*, in his own handwriting, and with his own name, is dated 1441. The earliest *dated* MS. produced by the Gersenists is the Parma *Codex* of the year 1466, which spells the name as *Gersem.* In the Mölk MS., dated 1421, claimed also by Gersen's partisans, this date does not refer to the *Liber primus de Imitatione Christi*, but to the *Contemplatio St. Bernardi de Passione Domini.* The two MSS. were only bound together at a subsequent time, as was then frequently done. Consequently, the Parma *Codex* (1466) is the oldest the Gersenists can quote. These dry details are of great importance, as shall soon be seen.

Thomas à Kempis—from Kempen—spent, as was said, the greatest part of his life at Mount St. Agnes, near Zwolle, and the re-

mainder in other houses of his order, and died a nonagenarian in 1471. In his humility he managed to avoid being elected to any dignity in his own congregation, except that once he was subprior. His *Sermones ad Novicios* are a proof that he was also for a while Master of Novices. His great occupation in the monastery was transcribing and composing books of devotion. Not less than thirty-four, exclusive of the four books of the *Imitation*, are universally admitted to be his production. Accordingly, he must not be considered a mere scribe or copyist, as he has been represented by some Gersenists, but many manuscripts written by him were of his own composition. He, however, never put his name to anything that came from his pen; and this was the general custom among the members of his congregation, who went further still, and seldom divulged the names of their brethren who had produced popular works found in the hands of the multitude. Unavoidable indiscretions nevertheless have furnished us, fortunately, with precious testimonies of the greatest weight on the question of authorship of the *Imitation*, and to this our attention must now be directed. It is but a sequel to the biography of Thomas à Kempis.

The first in importance is that of John Busch, or Buschius, a personal friend of Thomas, an illustrious member of the Windesheim Congregation, a holy man often employed by his ecclesiastical superiors in the reform of German monasteries. Several of the books he wrote are still extant, among them his *De Viris illustribus de Windesem* and *De Origine Modernæ Devotionis*. They were both undertaken at the command of the general superior of the order, John Van Naalwrijk. Rosweyde published an edition of both, under the common title *Chronicon Windesemense*.

This must be considered an *official* production of the congregation. Such documents, as is well known, always require in their author a strict adherence to truth, and can be entirely relied upon. Leibnitz besides has rendered to the veracity of Busch the following testimony: "*Buschium non dissimulare corruptelas, neque adulari suis, manifestum est.*"

In the twenty-first chapter *De Viris Illustribus*, speaking of the death of John Vos Van Heusden, Busch refers to a visit he himself received a few days previous from two brethren of St. Agnes' Convent: "*Quorum unus*," he says, "*frater Thomas de Kempis, vir probatæ vitæ, qui plures devotos libros composuit, videlicet qui sequitur me, de Imitatione Christi, cum aliis.*" Dr. Spitzen has lately proved, with the clearest evidence, that the words *videlicet*, etc., are not an addition by a more recent scribe, as has been pretended, but belong to the text itself of Busch.

The second testimony is that of Hermann Ryd, also a contempo-

rary of Thomas, who published a description of the convents of the Windesheim Congregation in his time, and says: "The brother who wrote the book of the *Imitation* is called Thomas. He is subprior of the Monastery of Mount St. Agnes, near Zwolle. He still lived in 1454, and I, Brother Hermann, of the Monastery of Newwerk, near Magdeburgh, being sent that year to the general chapter, have spoken with him." At that epoch the four books of the *Imitation* were always published together, under the general title *Imitation of Christ*. At an earlier period, Busch had spoken only of the first book, under the simple title *qui sequitur me*, which are the initial words of the first chapter.

It would be tedious, and it is not possible here, to quote all the contemporary testimonies. Father Becker enumerates as many as sixteen unexceptionable witnesses who had either seen and conversed with Thomas à Kempis, or at least had listened to those who had lived with him, and must have been well informed on the subject. Would not this be considered sufficient evidence of authenticity in favor of any ancient or modern work? The affirmation of reliable contemporaries is the strongest external evidence.

But the "internal evidence" is still more striking, and deserves to be given at a greater length. Already more than two hundred years ago, G. Heser, a Jesuit of Ingoldstadt, collected a large number of Germanisms, as he called them, found here and there in the *Imitation*, and he concluded that the writer must have been a German, translating unconsciously his own vernacular language into Latin. He did not make any distinction between the High and Low Dutch dialects. His book, entitled *Lexicon Germanico Thomæum*, was published at Ingoldstadt in 1651.

About the same time Thomas Carr, an English Augustinian,—his true name was Miles Pinckney; he had probably taken the name of Carr as a disguise in England,—insisted on the remarkable resemblance of the phraseology of the *Imitation* to that of the other *authentic* productions of Thomas à Kempis, and directly concluded that he was the author. He could not, he said, be an Italian, as Gersen was supposed to be. The book bears no trace of Italian phraseology in the Latin text.

In 1650, again, Father Reynaud, S. J., brought forward two new arguments in favor of Thomas. First, the similarity between the style of the *Imitation* and that of the productions of other writers belonging to the Congregation of Windesheim; and secondly, the frequent use of the words *devoti* and *devotio* common to the book and to the school of Gerald Groot. In recent times other locutions have been pointed out which considerably increase the strength of the argument. Within the last few years Father Becker, Dr. Spitzen, Karl Hirsche, Santini, etc., have given a remarkable ex-

tension to this branch of internal evidence; they have, in fact, carried it to the height of demonstration. Conviction, it is true, results mainly from the number of texts which are brought into juxtaposition. In Father Becker's volume more than a hundred pages are exclusively devoted to this discussion, divided into four most interesting chapters. A few general remarks—the only thing possible here—will scarcely give the reader a glimpse of the reality.

In the first place, the expressions called *Germanisms* by Father G. Heser, in 1651, belong, in point of fact, to the Netherland dialect, or Low Dutch, not to the German language properly so called. Two hundred years ago the pure German, or High Dutch, bore a much greater resemblance to the Flemish than it now does. It is known that during the last hundred years a number of great writers have transformed the German language into the classical shape it has now assumed. The Low Dutch itself (or Flemish) has considerably changed in *another* direction, and the actual Latin text must be examined in reference to the vulgar language, such as it was more than four centuries back. Few writers of the present age are competent. Mgr. Malou, it seems, has failed in some of his attempts on account of his limited knowledge of the old Flemish. Dr. Spitzen, on the contrary, is a master of this kind of philological criticism. Father Becker has popularized his efforts. He gives fifteen full pages of comparative quotations, so that even a reader unacquainted with the Flemish, old or new, is struck with the certainty that only a writer whose vernacular was the Low Dutch of that time could write the quaint Latin of the volume familiar to all of us.

In the second place, the Latin text alone of the *Imitation* is a conclusive proof that the author belonged to the Congregation of Windesheim. There are many expressions in it that are frequently found in the authors of that school and *nowhere else*. Abundant proofs are furnished by Father Becker, and the conclusion is irresistible that the book was written by a monk of this order. As it is easily ascertained that the same is true with regard to the other works of Thomas à Kempis that are universally acknowledged as authentic, it is difficult to resist the conviction that he wrote also the *Imitation*. The Latin text certainly does not bear the marks of the Augustan age, but, on the other side, it broadly differs from the mediæval Latin by the use of certain words and sentences peculiar to the Windesheim Congregation and to the style of Thomas à Kempis himself. Father Becker proves, for instance, that the words *religiosus*, *monasterium*, *prælatus*, *cella*, *monachus*, have a peculiar meaning in the Order of Canons founded by Gerard Groot. This had already been remarked by Father Reynaud in the seven-

teenth century. The numerous examples quoted by Dr. Spitzen and Father Becker give to the argument a cogency it never possessed before.

Thirdly, the *Imitation of Christ* contains many allusions to *facts* known to have happened in the Netherlands during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, some of which occurred in the neighborhood of Zwollè and Mount St. Agnes. This brings on the discussion of historical events, which we are compelled to leave unnoticed, though they add a great strength to the argument.

Fourthly and finally, not only peculiar expressions, whole sentences—nay, entire paragraphs—are met with in the *Imitation* which perfectly coincide with passages preserved to this day in the writings of Gerard Groot, Van Schoonoven, Busch, and others, but Dr. Karl Hirsche, in his grammatical researches on the *Imitation*, has fallen upon a new proof, altogether unexpected and extremely remarkable. This consists both in the rhythm and rhyme and in a punctuation of a very peculiar nature. Everybody had remarked the rhyme in the *Imitation* without paying great attention to it, because, since St. Leo the Great, it has often been used by ecclesiastical writers. But in the case of the *Imitation*, when it is combined with the rhythm and the punctuation discovered by Dr. Hirsche, it becomes a characteristic of all the works of Thomas à Kempis, and of them alone. This punctuation is extremely simple, not having more than four characters, each marking a longer or shorter pause; but when the text is read with a strict adherence to its rules, a new sense, as it were, suddenly comes out, and the profound maxims we all know, that have often so deeply struck all of us, make a much deeper impression still and convince the reader that this is indeed what the author intended.

The same, more or less, is visible in all the works of Thomas à Kempis, and of no one else. This discovery of Dr. Hirsche points directly to Thomas as the only author to whom the *Imitation* can be ascribed. Father Becker, following up the hint, has done for the second *Sermon to the Novices*—a work undoubtedly of Kempis—what Karl Hirsche had accomplished for several chapters of the *Imitation*. The conclusion need not be pointed out.

V.

The external and internal evidence, so striking in the case of Thomas à Kempis, is almost totally absent in that of Gersen. This has been sufficiently proved. For a long time the MSS. appeared to be in his favor. Great paleographers of the seventeenth century, most of them of the Benedictine Order,—Mabillon among them,—declared that several of those documents brought to Paris in 1671 could not be more recent than the thirteenth or fourteenth

century. If proved, this would have been fatal to the claims of Kempis. Many men consequently became convinced of it, owing to the affirmation of Mabillon, and supported the cause of Gersen. From a more careful study of the case, however, the verdict of paleography remained but doubtful, as was seen, and left intact the strong proofs derived from history and philology.

Recently new researches in libraries and public records have brought forth a number of MSS. of the *Imitation* unknown to Mabillon and his brethren. They have been classified with respect to their origin, place of deposit, and peculiar marks bearing on the probable author. This has given a new turn to the question, and the cause of Thomas, instead of being weakened by the consideration of MSS., receives an additional strength that can scarcely be exaggerated. A lucid account of it is found again in the work of Father Becker, and our simple task must consist in giving a brief synopsis of it. Becker himself follows Spitzen, whose book appeared only two years ago. This, accordingly, is the last aspect of the controversy, and it is to be hoped that before long the question will be altogether settled. Many recent conversions of Gersenists render it very probable.

In the first place, it is important to ascertain the number of MSS. still extant. In 1671 the Benedictine monasteries chiefly had been ransacked, and among those brought to Paris only thirteen had been selected on which Mabillon rested his cause. Father Mella, in his *Controversia Gersenniana*, confining himself to the side in which he felt interested, enumerated, in 1875, twenty-one bearing the name of Gersen and twenty-nine without any name—fifty in all. The number known at this moment is far greater, and as new ones are often discovered, it must be inferred that many more exist still which have never been brought out from the shelves of old libraries.

M. Arthur Loth, of Paris, wrote in 1874, in the *Revue des Questions Historiques*, that he had ascertained the existence of one hundred and eighty-six MSS., of which one hundred and sixteen came from Germany alone. Besides Germany, researches were made by him in Flanders, France, Italy, and England. But more recent investigations have rendered his last labors almost useless. Dr. Grube, for instance, instead of one hundred and sixteen MSS. derived from the whole of Germany, mentions forty-five contained in the Royal Library of Munich alone, and most of these are not specified in the catalogue of Mgr. Santini, more recent than that of Loth. This last gentleman found only thirty MSS. in Belgian Flanders; there are nearly as many in the Royal Library of Brussels alone. M. Ruelens, keeper of the department of MSS. at Brussels, thinks that in Belgium there must be about a hundred. In Eng-

land, where M. Loth found only three, sixteen are enumerated by Mr. Kettlewell in his book, *The Authorship of the De Imitatione Christi.*

The Netherlands, whose libraries had been pillaged and devastated by the Reformers, were, until lately, supposed to contain only a few. Father Becker, in a private search of his own, ascertained the existence of thirty-two of them, though he could not obtain access to several important libraries, in which he thinks there must be others.

At the present moment very nearly three hundred MSS. of the *Imitation* are inscribed in the catalogues of the most noted libraries of Europe, and there is no doubt that many more are still unknown. Strange to say, few, comparatively, are met with in France and Italy—a rather damaging fact for the cause of Chancellor Gerson and of Abbot Gersen.

Many MSS. do not bear the name of any author. Leaving aside those who ascribe the book to Gerson, Ludolph the Carthusian, and others, whose claims are now altogether discarded, it is ascertained that only *twenty* show on the title-page the name of Gersen; more than *fifty* that of Thomas à Kempis. That the book itself was not very well known in Italy in the sixteenth century seems probable from an anecdote related by Bartoli in his *Life of St. Ignatius* (t. ii., p. 251). When Ignatius went to Monte Cassino to give the exercises to a grandee of the Court of Charles V., he found it useful to present every monk of this great Benedictine convent with a copy of the *Imitation*, which they had not yet procured. This little story does not speak well in favor of Gersen.

But the remarkable fact of the actual distribution of the manuscripts in the various countries of Europe has a striking and almost systematic character of great strength in the present controversy. The reflections of Father Becker on this subject deserve quotation. We translate (page 216):

"Southern Germany—chiefly Bavaria—is more rich in manuscripts of the *Imitation* than the northern provinces, for the same reason that there are more in Belgium than in Holland," namely, the fierceness of the persecutions at the time of the Reformation in Saxony and the Netherlands, whilst in Bavaria and Belgium the Catholics enjoyed peace. "Belgium contains a greater number of those manuscripts than any other country, relatively to its size. . . . . In case the *Imitation* had been written by an Italian abbot, it is not in Germany, but in Italy that the majority of them should be found, particularly because the convents of Italy were not devastated and destroyed as they were in Holland and Northern

Germany during the religious wars," yet "very few comparatively are found in Italy—*apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto*" (page 217).

"Striking remarks of the same nature justify the conclusion that, judging from the present localities where these manuscripts are found in greater abundance, the author must have lived and written in Germany or the Low Countries (Belgium or Holland),—that is to say, wherever the Canons of Windesheim and the Brothers of Common Life had established their houses. And though the relative number of those documents in the various countries of Europe leaves the pre-eminence doubtful between the Low Countries and Germany, still the dates which many of them bear [a remarkable feature in the present case] evidently favor Holland, and give a new strength to the cause of Thomas à Kempis."

A last peculiarity deserves a brief mention. Many manuscripts distributed through the former range of country occupied by the Canons of Windesheim contain only one or two of the four books of the *Imitation*, without any common title. Nearly all those belonging to Italy, on the contrary, have the four books, as with us, and bear the common heading, *Imitatio Christi*. This must be considered a positive proof that the manuscripts of the first series are older than those of the second. It cannot now be denied that the work appeared successively in four distinct parts, with a particular title for each part. On this Father Becker justly remarks, "If the *Imitation* had been written in the thirteenth century, and published entire at once, as we have it to-day,—a common supposition of the Gersenists,—the publishers of the fifteenth century would not have brought forward the four books as *independent* treatises. It would have been preposterous to give them piecemeal to the public, as they did, for the only pleasure of offering them afterwards in their former and original shape, as a whole." This, in our opinion, is an important reflection.

After a number of general remarks of the same nature on the manuscripts of the *Imitation*, many of which could not be even mentioned in this paper, Father Becker passes to the consideration of some particular manuscripts whose titles and other indications bear strongly in favor of Thomas à Kempis.

As was seen, the Benedictines of the seventeenth century relied mainly for their opinion in favor of Gersen on several manuscripts which they thought anterior to the fifteenth century. They won over to their cause many adherents who have ever since ardently supported the same opinion. Further researches have lately brought forward other manuscripts dating from the beginning to the middle of the fourteenth century, consequently anterior to the oldest ever produced by the Gersenists, whose age is exactly that of 1466. The notes and titles of these new documents being entirely

in accord with the well-known biography of Thomas à Kempis, furnish another remarkable proof that he was the author. Thus the consideration of manuscripts—the only strong support of the Gersenist cause—takes a different turn, and speaks now in favor of the adverse party.

Father Becker comments on the celebrated copy of the Gaesdonck Monastery, which Dr. Karl Hirsche thinks is the nearest in point of perfection to the autograph of Thomas dated 1441. It bears the date 1427.

Another copy, coming originally from Nimeguen, now in the Royal Library of Brussels, is exactly of the same age,—1427.

Another yet, from the Convent of Ewich, near Atterdorn, in Westphalia, was written the year previous,—1426. The three must have been copied from the original, known to have existed in 1425 in the neighborhood of Utrecht. Two other copies, one from the Abbey of St. Trond, the other from Ochsenhausen, bear also the date of 1427. "The fact," remarks Father Becker, "that the *Imitation* was copied simultaneously, in 1427, at Ewich, Doetinchem, and Nimeguen, proves that there were older manuscripts in the same countries." An allusion has just been made to an original copy existing near Utrecht in 1425.

But the autograph of Thomas à Kempis, dated 1441, and now preserved in the Royal Library of Brussels, would alone secure his claims to the authorship. This manuscript, whose authenticity has never been controverted, contains thirteen different treatises, all bound together, the *four* books of the *Imitation* (*each* with its separate title) being placed at the head in the manuscript. All agree that these thirteen treatises were written by Thomas à Kempis; but it has been said that he was only the copyist of the *four* books of the *Imitation*, though he had himself composed the nine following opuscules. This, Mabillon maintained in the discussion of 1671 at Paris. The only reason he gave in support of his opinion was the note written at the end of the manuscript: "*Finitus et completus A. D. MCCCCXLI, per manus Fratris Thomæ Kempîs in Monte Stæ. Agnetis prope Zwollas.*" The words *per manus Fratris*, etc., proved, in the eyes of Mabillon, that he only transcribed the work of another. Still, the great Benedictine acknowledged that the nine treatises published after the *Imitation* in the same manuscript were the composition of à Kempis, and the note being written at the end referred equally to all.

It is known besides that the writers of the Windesheim Congregation, particularly Thomas à Kempis, never declared themselves authors of the books they published, and kept their well-known maxim, *ama nesciri*, etc. Another fact that Mabillon did not probably know, and which would have silenced him, has been ascer-

tained by Father Becker. In the Burgundian Library of Brussels, there are manuscripts containing authentic works of Thomas, among others his *Sermones ad Novicios*, ending with the same formula, *Finitus et scriptus per manus Fratris Thomæ Campensis A. D. MCCCCLVI.*

An additional observation of Father Becker must be copied here: "Thomas could not be ignorant of the fact that in 1441 the *Imitation* was read and admired by many men, who believed he was the author. In case he was not, he would have induced them in error by copying this golden book in the same manuscript with other works of his own composition. His well-known modesty, leaving aside his veracity, could not have suffered it. Finally, the erasures and alterations by his own hand, with which this manuscript is full, prove beyond contradiction that he was the author of it. An author alone can take such liberties with a manuscript, particularly in the case of such a book as the *Imitation of Jesus Christ.*"

At this moment learned men in Italy are openly in favor of Thomas. Twenty years ago this would have been considered extraordinary, if not impossible. A number of Benedictine fathers in Germany and France have also abandoned the cause of Gersen, in spite of the efforts of their *confrère*, Dom C. Wolfsgruber, in the book he published at Augsburg in 1880. Everything is evidently preparing for a universal acknowledgment of the claims of à Kempis, and for the final success of the powerful and numerous advocates he has counted on his side during the last three hundred years.

BANCROFT'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.

History of the United States of America from the Discovery of the Continent. By George Bancroft. The Author's Last Revision. Vols. I. and II. New York, D. Appleton & Co., 1883.

THE great history of the United States which has been the life-long work of George Bancroft, comes to us with the author's last revision. The first volume was issued originally in 1834; it comes now with the date of 1883, an interval of nearly half a century. Seldom has it been permitted to an author to see his work in the hands of the public for such a series of years, to modify it from time to time, and then in a serene and happy old age, with faculties still vigorous, with the accumulated treasures of a life of studious research to recast it in a final revision, so as to leave it as a noble monument of genius, devoted with unswerving fidelity to an artistic portrayal of the annals of his native country.

"In this last revision," says his preface, "as in the first composition, it is the fixed purpose to secure perfect accuracy in the relation of facts, even to their details and their coloring, and to keep truth clear from the clouds, however brilliant, of conjecture and tradition. No well-founded criticism that has been seen, whether made here or abroad, with a good will or a bad one, has been neglected.

"The next aim is lucidity in the ordering of the narrative, so that the reader may follow the changes of public affairs in their connection, and with every page be carried forward in the story.

"There is no end to the difficulty in choosing language which will awaken in the reader the very same thought that was in the mind of the writer. In the form of expression, many revisions are hardly enough to assure strict correctness and propriety. Repetitions and redundancies have been removed; greater precision has been sought for; the fitter word that offered itself accepted; and without the surrender of the right of history to pronounce its opinion, care has been taken never unduly to forestall the judgment of the reader, but to leave events as they sweep onward, to speak their own condemnation or praise."

Bancroft is our first great philosophic historian, exploring with vast research amid printed books and pamphlets, the State documents of the colonies and of the European States, the unpublished papers of great actors in the national drama or the politics of the

world, not only the facts of the successive events in our history, but the sources and motives, the schemes and the projects, the religious or political impulses, which originally prompted, which directed and guided, or which thwarted and perverted them.

While others regarded the early history of the country as but the simple annals of little communities of men toiling in the wilderness, to be studied from the point of view from which the actors themselves may have recorded it, Bancroft looked to the other colonies on the continent and their influence, and to the growth of opinions in faith and politics, in commerce and manufactures, which controlled the action of governments in Europe, and impelled or influenced by fostering or hostile hands the emigration to America, which, in the Providence of God, was, in less than two centuries, to build up a mighty republic, and blend, by one of the greatest marvels, men of all nationalities, modes of thought, trained under the most diverse of institutions and customs, into one homogeneous people, easily characterized among the nations of the earth, in all physical and mental relations.

Mr. Bancroft was not a mere closet scholar; he brought to his task the mind of a statesman, one fitting him to take part in governing men and controlling the destinies of nations, and since he first began his labor as a historian, he has shown this fitness by his able discharge of the duties of a member of the Federal Cabinet, and of ambassador in diplomatic positions at two of the greatest of European courts. His ability, therefore, to take a broad statesman-like view of the progress of our history, and of the important changes of policy at home and abroad is indubitable; the bent of his studious mind to seek and unfold the real philosophy of our history is no less apparent. His vast research is not made patent in this last edition, as it was in the first, by the copious references to authorities, which, on page after page, marshalled the authors to whom he had appealed and weighed their importance, noted their discrepancies, and showed the probable line of historic truth. His history almost from the outset became the mine for minor and local historians, and many, who made no researches themselves, did not scruple to adopt the language of Bancroft as their own, and to transfer to their pages the very citations of authorities, where, perhaps, forty books or documents are referred to for a single sentence, and then parade them as though in their own researches they had examined, confronted and compared them all to elicit the truth. In his later volumes, as originally issued, the historian abandoned these references, and now has expunged them entirely from his work.

From the broad well-defined outlines of the picture as he originally conceived it, Mr. Bancroft has not departed; though the last

half century has been pregnant with great events, though a civil war has tested the strength of our government and the vigor of our national life, though parties have risen and disappeared, and opinions on many points have undergone remarkable modifications and changes, there has been rarely occasion for any adoption of a new view in the philosophy of our history.

With regard to details it has been different. The glowing pages of Bancroft awakened the enthusiasm of scholars in all parts of the country; who set to work, each in his own sphere, to elucidate and develop the history of some State or district, some movement, campaign or battle, some reform or generous scheme for the elevation of our fellow-men. Much of the great mass of writings on American history, issued within the last four decades, owes its origin, in no slight degree, to the influence of Bancroft's *History of the United States.* These new contributions, labors on almost unexplored fields to which he guided them, led to the formation of great historical libraries, where the rarest books bearing on early America were gathered, and to publication by societies and individuals of early works made comprehensible and available by careful local annotation. To this new material Mr. Bancroft was no indifferent spectator; every old work brought to light, or new work prepared, was carefully examined, and his work was unsparingly corrected by the new light thrown on the subject, so far as stereotype plates could be altered, even when whole pages had to be suppressed and rewritten. His history has constantly kept up with the progress of research and development. The present revision gives symmetry and proportion to the whole history, enduing it with a uniformity of tone and color, which was occasionally lost amid the necessary changes. It is now like a mellow fruit, ripened by the kindly influences of sun and shower through the long genial summer days.

As now given, the two volumes before us embrace *The History of the United States as Colonies*, divided into three parts: the first from 1492 to 1660; the second from 1660 to 1688; and the third coming down to 1748, with the first epoch of "The American Revolution" (1748–1763), "Britain Overthrows the European Colonial System."

The changes made in this ultimate revision are many, and in some cases worthy of remark. The early explorations of the Northmen are still doubted. Some points that have been called in question are avoided entirely. Thus we find that in consequence of the warm and able controversy in regard to the authenticity of the narrative of a voyage by Verrazzano to our coast, a controversy begun by one who impeached the narrative as a fiction, Mr. Bancroft, evidently not deeming a case fully made out on either

side, omits entirely the notice given by him in his earlier editions, where the narrative of Verrazzano's voyage was treated as genuine.

The voyage, the narrative and the discussion are alike ignored.

The same critical knife has not been applied, however, to the Gourgnes narrative, which stands as authentic history, even in this edition.

The landfall of Gosnold is changed; and Popham's short-lived colony in Maine, which excited controversy a few years ago in New England, receives here a notice. In treating of the early history of Virginia, the story of the rescue of Captain John Smith by the Indian girl Pocahontas is expunged, and no allusion to the romantic episode appears, except in a statement that in works published by Smith late in life such a story is found. New England writers first questioned the authenticity of the account, while Virginians generally upheld it, but Mr. Bancroft evidently deemed it no longer sufficiently attested to justify its insertion.

The expedition of Argal against the mission settlement of the Jesuits in Maine, and his subsequent destruction of the French houses and defences at Port Royal, were characterized in former editions as the work of marauders and pirates; but now the censure is omitted, and the attack in time of peace on a settlement of missionaries of a friendly power is justified. It is represented simply as a vindication by England of her claims.

Since the earlier editions appeared, the sword has forced some of the States to abolish slavery, and views have changed. Now New England does not care to be reminded of her own slave-holding iniquities, and the author omits facts not creditable to that group of colonies, and omits also a tribute to Pope Alexander III., of whom he had heretofore said that he was "true to the spirit of his office, which, during the supremacy of brute force in the Middle Age, made of the chief minister of religion the tribune of the people and the guardian of the oppressed."

The most extended alteration is to be found in the early history of Maryland. In previous editions the character of the first Lord Baltimore is held up as an example worthy of all admiration, now it is trampled in the very mire. The story of his Avalon colony is so told as to reflect no credit on him; and while in former editions it is said of Lord Baltimore: "His sincerity, his capacity for business, his industry and his fidelity are acknowledged by all historians," in this last edition he is dismissed with the statement that he misconceived "the interests of his country and of his king, and took part in exposing to danger civil liberty and the right of the Parliament of England." The reader is left to wonder how the liberal charter he secured for Avalon or Maryland, or their guarantees for the rights of the settlers, his anxiety to prevent

all religious or political animosities, could be so detrimental to civil liberty, to England or its sovereign, and especially to that Parliament which soon suppressed royalty, abolished the Upper House, refused to dissolve or appeal to the people by a new election, and which yielded at last only to the military power it had created, but could not control. If the Long Parliament conceived aright the interests of England and of Charles I., if it saved civil liberty and the rights of the parliamentary constitution of England, we may condemn Lord Baltimore; if it did not, then the words applied to Lord Baltimore seem intended for the people of New England who sympathized with the Long Parliament, and they may have been misplaced inadvertently.

The history of the settlement of Maryland under the second Lord Baltimore is rewritten so as to belittle in every way the proprietary and those who under it planted that province, with a liberality, a prudence, an administrative ability till that time unequalled in America. Every line shows the influence of a religious fanatic, whose violence should prevent any sound historian from adopting his statements or his conclusions, for where Catholics are concerned he cannot possibly be civil or honest.

Under the new theory of history, Maryland ceases to have been a colony planted under Catholic influence or controlled at any time by Catholics; Clayborne becomes a hero and a patriot, the Protestants who in Virginia allowed no Catholic to land, the Puritans who proscribed Catholics and flogged, starved and hung Quakers in New England, and imprisoned for life the one rash man who dared raise his voice in their behalf—these men, we are now assured, are the men who really deserve credit for Maryland toleration. Can a man believe it and not dishonor his common sense? If the Church of England man and the Puritan of that day became tolerant in Maryland, when bigots, fanatics and persecutors elsewhere, it could only be due to some Catholic influence in Maryland; their humanity in the actual presence of Catholics must have burst forth into life, nowhere else manifest at that day, for in England Catholic priests met death in those times from Episcopalian and Puritan alike. Puritans in Maryland put Catholic prisoners to death when the field was won as ruthlessly as Melendez did Huguenots in Florida, and Episcopalians established their Church by law the moment they gained power, taxed Catholics doubly, and compelled them to support an Episcopalian ministry and attend their churches under heavy penalties. The mildest of censure, however, is given to all this, and rhetoric lends its aid to hold up the persecutor as the champion of religious liberty.

The sketch of the religious affairs in England from the outset of the Reformation to the settlement of New England precedes the

history of that group of colonies, when, to give the reader a proper understanding, it should have ushered in the first chapter of Maryland's annals. The settlement of Maryland, no less than that of New England, was the result of the diabolical spirit that swayed England from the time of Elizabeth. The Reformers claimed the right of private judgment, but from the first denied the right to Catholics. They claimed not only the right to form their own creed, their own worship, their own ideal God, but also the right to slay Catholic clergy and religious, destroy or seize their churches and institutions, prohibit their worship, deprive Catholics of life, property or good name. This Protestantism claims to this day, and virtually exercises in part or in whole. Much as a man may free himself from other Protestant ideas, he never fully shakes off the shackles of this one, and the Protestant always acts on the axiom that he has a perfect right to dispose of Catholics and all they possess according to his will and pleasure. The sense of natural equity in their regard seems dead or dormant.

Unconsciously this leads to great unfairness, as we see it here. The majority of the people of England in Elizabeth's day were still Catholics, and clung to the old faith earnestly. All through her reign the most savage cruelties were perpetrated on them; priests were hanged, drawn and quartered in all parts of the kingdom; the man guilty of possessing a Catholic book, or any document from Rome forfeited his life; men and women were hanged and pressed to death for harboring priests; for refusing to attend the services of the Church of England, a hideous mockery performed in the churches where the mass had been offered for centuries; wealthy Catholics were impoverished by enormous fines, and the poorer were crowded into jails in every shire of England. Compared to these sufferings, what the Puritans endured was but the tapping of a feather beside the blows of a scorpion in the brawny arms of a Roman soldier.

Yet, in his picture of the religious change in England, Mr. Bancroft omits this entirely, giving no indication to the reader of what Catholics endured, while the sufferings of the Puritans are sketched in the most touching language.

The result is that the treatment of the Maryland settlement is essentially unfair, in what is suppressed, and in what is said and implied. The glow of enthusiasm is gone, and a tone of disparagement prevails.

The proprietors who took up lands in Maryland were mainly Catholics, although most of those brought out by them as tenants and mechanics were Protestants. The freeholders at first alone had votes, and thus, as he admits (p. 166), the administration was in the hands of the Catholics, who, with a Catholic governor and under

a Catholic proprietary, made the province essentially a Catholic one. It is, therefore, misleading to omit the statement, "the Catholics took quiet possession of the little place; and religious liberty obtained a home, its only home in the wide world, at the humble village which bore the name of St. Mary's;" or this, "such were the beautiful auspices under which Maryland started into being; its prosperity and peace seemed assured; the interests of its people and its proprietary were united; and for some years its internal peace and harmony were undisturbed by domestic faction. Its history is the history of benevolence, gratitude and toleration."

That these original words were true is clear from a fact constantly ignored. The first Lord Baltimore in his Avalon province (named not after a fabled isle, but after the traditional cradle of Catholicity in England) provided for both Catholic and Protestant clergy, to give all his colonists perfect equality in religious advantages; and though his equity was repaid with base ingratitude by a Protestant clergyman, the second Lord Baltimore in the same spirit had a Protestant chapel erected at St. Mary's for the use of his Protestant settlers. That no prominent man belonged to that faith is apparent from the fact that the key was kept by Gerard, a Catholic. In no other English colony except those of the Lords Baltimore was provision ever made for the services of the two faiths. The fact outweighs a world of quibbles and false issues raised by prejudice, and deserves to be stated.

In the new version of the act of 1649 there are points equally open to criticism.

But if the account of the Catholic province of Maryland has been cooled to the lowest point, that devoted to the Puritans of Massachusetts still glows with all the enthusiasm of the writer's earlier days. Imagination lends such colors to the canvas that the picture is essentially false.

New matter is introduced as to the early constitution of Connecticut (i., p. 275); but all is done to palliate New England intolerance. We look in vain for the frank avowal to be read of old: "The severity of the laws (in New England) was sharpened against infidelity on the one hand and sectarianism on the other; nor can it be denied, nor should it be concealed, that the elders, especially Wilson and Norton, instigated and sustained the government in its worst cruelties." Certainly, the new edition has something of the very concealment here so manfully denounced. Notable, too, is the omission of the passage (old edition, i., p. 454): "It has been attempted to excuse the atrocity of the law, because the Quakers avowed principles that seemed subversive of social order. Any government might, on the same grounds, find in its unreasonable fears an excuse for its cruelties. The argument justifies the expul-

sion of the Moors from Spain, of the Huguenots from France; and it forms a complete apology for Laud, who was honest in his bigotry, persecuting the Puritans with the same good faith with which he recorded his dreams. The fears of one class of men are not the measure of the rights of another. It is said, the Quakers themselves rushed on the sword, and so were suicides. If it were so, the men who held the sword were accessories to the crime."

Under this theory it would not be possible to justify the recent persecution of Catholics in Prussia, where nearly a thousand churches were for years deprived of pastors, bishops driven into exile, and bishops and priests imprisoned and fined, not for doing anything against the State, but for performing their regular, daily official duties, as they had done for years and their predecessors for centuries. Or it would justify England in Elizabeth's day, when it was made high treason to say mass or harbor a priest.

To save the character of New England, the persecution of the Quakers is now minimized, and we are told (new edition, i., p. 314), "Prohibiting the coming of Quakers was not persecution." To the honor of New England this theory was not accepted even then universally, and one man stands forth in Massachusetts, who then and there denounced the treatment of the Quakers as persecution. He relieved with food the poor women after they had been scourged half-naked through the streets of Boston, and though imprisoned continued to denounce their treatment as persecution. His long years of imprisonment only prove that they persisted in defending their cruelty. "The doctrine of toleration, with pledges of peace, was" not, as our author states, "soon to be received."

But while he now portrays the Quakers in New England as unreasoning enthusiasts, when he comes to speak of the body in Pennsylvania he calls them "men who had learned the right principle of public law from the uneducated son of a poor Leicestershire weaver" (i., p. 527); while, in his former editions, it was "the principle of God in their own hearts." But under either view how are we to regard the men of New England who punished by death men and women who had "the right principle of public law" or "the principle of God in their hearts"?

When we come to Cromwell we are startled to find his "freedom of conscience" referred to, but there is a prudent omission of the statement that he sought to attain popularity by "burying all the mutual antipathies of sects in one common burning hatred against the court of Rome" (old edition, ii., p. 22).

In the new edition Charles II. appears in a new light. We now find introduced the assertions: "The restored king was a Papist" (p. 350); "he had no purpose so seriously at heart as the restoration of the Catholic worship in England" (p. 344); "to protect the

Catholic religion was the constant desire of Charles II." (p. 395). Thus constantly he endeavors on certainly untenable grounds to hold up Charles as a bugbear to excite anti-Catholic feeling. Charles may have preferred the Catholic religion, but he had not the courage to avow it or to do anything for it. The men who came into real power with the Restoration had one well-defined plan, and that was to establish the power of the Church of England firmly. Charles II., James, and William III., none of them were personally enthusiasts for the establishment, but in the reigns of all it made steady strides to power. He himself (p. 440) admits that "the English ministry under Charles II. issued an order that offices should be entrusted exclusively to Protestants." The expulsions of Puritan clergy under Charles; the confiding of the monopoly of printing Bibles to Oxford University, by which the Geneva Bible was superseded even in New England by the King James version, the introduction of Episcopacy into American colonies where it had been unknown, all show this.

No credit is given to Charles or James for their project of building up a great English power in America. At the Restoration, New England and Virginia, with Maryland, were isolated, with a colony of another nation and two languages between them, while the French were closing in on the North, and the South lay open for any Spanish advance. When William III. landed in England, the flag of that country floated from the Penobscot to the St. Mary's, and the powerful Iroquois confederation had been enlisted to keep the French beyond the lakes, if not drive them altogether from the West. The result was due to acts of Charles and James, and to the colonization they inspired and encouraged, wisely in theory, if not always prudently in the choice of instruments.

Mr. Bancroft recognizes this only by making the second part of his *History of the United States as Colonies* bear this title: "British America attains Geographical Unity. From 1660 to 1688," while for his ensuing part he has to group, for a period of sixty years, the French colonization of the West and Louisiana, and the border wars at the North and South, with the settlement of Georgia, assigning to it all the somewhat vague title: "Colonization of the West and of Georgia. From 1688 to 1748." The reigns of the Stuart brothers show New Netherlands become New York; New Jersey settled; Penn, the friend of James, founding the great colony of Pennsylvania; the Carolinas opened to emigrants and settlements formed. From the fall of the Stuarts nothing of the kind was done, except the grant to Oglethorpe, but on the contrary, much was done to thwart and cripple the colonies.

The progress of this period is mainly due to James, who as Duke

of York took a deep interest in America, and was the first to form any statesmanlike plans for its future.

In his second volume of the new edition (pp. 71, 72) there is a hint of what we owe to James in his projected union in the colonies "as a barrier against the red men and against the French;" and we discover, incidentally, that William adhered as much as possible to the previous policy, in superseding charters. An act of Maryland in 1692 "giving validity in the colony to the Magna Charta of England," "was not accepted by the crown." In speaking of the penal laws passed against Catholics in Maryland, he now omits the well-known statement, "The Roman Catholics alone were left without an ally, exposed to English bigotry and colonial injustice. They alone were disfranchised on the soil which, long before Locke pleaded for toleration, or Penn for religious freedom, they had chosen, not as their own asylum only, but with Catholic liberty, as the asylum of every persecuted sect. In the land which Catholics had opened to Protestants, the Catholic inhabitant was the sole victim to Anglican intolerance" (old edition, iii., p. 32). Now we read: "In 1704, under the reign of Queen Anne, the Roman Catholics alone were given up to Anglican intolerance."

It is not easy to ascertain what is or what is not intolerance in our author's estimation. Nothing is said in condemnation of the Massachusetts law of 1647, by which any Jesuit entering the colony was to be banished, and put to death if he returned. In New York the Leisler party, inspired by the most furious fanaticism against Catholics, is represented (ii., p. 38) as the "party of toleration." Governor Bellomont of New York is praised for his "sound heart and honorable sympathies," but not a word is said of the law which he carried through the New York legislature by a triple vote of his own in council, and under which a Jesuit or Catholic priest entering the colony was liable to be imprisoned for life, and if he broke prison, to be put to death. The same man of sound heart and honorable sympathies had a similar law placed on the statute book of Massachusetts. To require Puritan emigrants to take an oath of supremacy and allegiance in Maryland, is styled "religious bigotry." Was it not equally so to require it of Catholics in England, Virginia or any other of the colonies? The acts of Louis XIV. against the Huguenots are depicted in the most intense colors, and held up as the very embodiment of persecution, and yet every word of his description, substituting England for France and Catholics for Huguenots, would apply exactly, though the sufferings of the English Catholics never elicit a single well-rounded sentence of sympathy.

As we proceed in the new edition we find the graphic account

of the treaty at Shackamaxon thrown aside, new matter in regard to Governor Hunter's administration in New York and the first bill of the English parliament imposing taxes on that colony. In treating of the history of Connecticut, the well-known story of the extinguishing of the lights, and the sudden abstraction of the charter which was hidden in an oak, that tell of its fall received almost divine worship, disappears, and another story shares its fate,—it is that which has been so often repeated of the defiance given to Fletcher when he came armed with royal orders to take command of the militia of that colony. He evidently treats them both as fables.

When he comes to discuss the story of New England witchcraft, there are many modifications, and a long passage showing Cotton Mather's activity in the prosecutions, and the manner in which he was sustained by the Governor, the chief judge, and the president of Harvard College, is omitted.

The splendid picture which he drew of the orgin and growth of the French power, their explorations and adventurous daring, remains substantially as of old, although there are omissions supplied by bald statements which do not harmonize with the narrative. The story of La Salle is in the main rewritten, but that of his last expedition does not show sufficient care; it approximates the truth, but is marred by unsound theories, which, however, give color to the whole account, though at variance with documents.

But the Spanish colony of Florida, its early enterprise, its subsequent decline, the extent of exploration, the missions which embraced a large number of tribes, and obtained a high degree of success, are, unfortunately, not treated at all, and thus the story of the border contest between Florida and Carolina, and at a later date with Georgia, can be but imperfectly understood, without some knowledge of the position of the Spanish colony with its surrounding tribes of Christian Indians. The story of Ayavalla as found in the pages of Bancroft is utterly inadequate. The horrors of Indian warfare in New England and New York are told in moving terms, but in the whole history of the country there is nothing to compare to that merciless invasion of peaceful Christian towns by heathen Indians under white leaders, but the massacre of the neophytes and the horrible deaths of the Spanish missionaries, rivalling, in their frightful details, those of Brebeuf and his comrades at the North, are veiled under a few phrases that give no competent idea of the enormous crime against humanity.

We may thus judge of the extent of the changes and modifications introduced by the author into this last revision. The early liberality is replaced by an unmistakable bias against the Catholic Church, which pervades the whole narrative. The political

changes in our own country do not show so much influence. In the details much that inspires historical doubt has been discarded, and new facts especially relating to government are introduced. Yet it would not be easy to decide whether the work has gained substantially, or whether the reputation of the work would not have been greater had it remained in the form in which it was twenty years ago.

The history was originally a series of brilliant essays, full of skill and power, in which, gaining enthusiasm from the study of each successive theme, the author became imbued with the spirit that actuated the founders and framers of the destinies of each colony. Each was a sort of personal impassioned plea for a place in history. The earnestness with which each narrative was given won on the reader, and the graces of a style peculiar to the writer completed the charm. That such a work attained at once a widespread popularity and retained it, can be easily understood; but with all its philosophical spirit, this treatment of the widely diverse elements constituting the earlier period of our history, involved the sacrifice of a consistent and well-defined standard, and, as we have seen, principles and conduct approved at one place under one set of relations, are condemned elsewhere when the relations are changed.

This inconsistency is the great defect of the earlier portion of Bancroft's *History of the United States*, an epoch very difficult to treat in detail, as it must necessarily be treated, without losing sight of fixed and settled principles based on the true philosophy of history.

Thus the doctrines of Fox are "the principle of God in the heart," "the right principles of public law;" and yet the Church members in Massachusetts, "by the fundamental law of the colony, constitute the oracle of the Divine will;" the right of private judgment is exalted as the great privilege of Protestantism, yet Mrs. Hutchinson is accused of "intense fanaticism in sustaining the paramount authority of private judgment;" and, on the other hand, Roger Williams is exalted as the first man in modern christendom to assert in its plenitude the "doctrine of the liberty of conscience." Yet Williams was influenced by such a fanatical hatred of everything pertaining to Catholicity, that he would not hold communion with ministers who recognized as valid ordination in the Church of England which was derived from that of Rome; nor would he recognize the English flag because it had a cross in it, given by the Pope to the English kings. He would be in full sympathy with the persecution of the Episcopalian Brownes, and with his principles could not consistently have admitted Catholics into the colony he founded. In former editions, the author ad-

mitted that in the early printed laws of Rhode Island, Catholics were excepted from the right of freedom of conscience, and attempted to make it appear that in the original form no such exception existed. In the present work the discussion is overlooked, and the fact of the exception, and its repeal during the Revolution, when the French visited the colony, are alike ignored. Yet the exception was perfectly in accord with Williams's known attitude towards the Catholic Church.

The author confounds freedom of thought, which no one can check, with the freedom of professing any certain doctrines, and what is still more, freedom to offer public worship according to the plan accepted by the individual conscience.

In regarding the history of the colonization of the United States here given as a whole, the sketch of the Indian tribes seems inadequate. It embraces but a small part of the nations covering our territory, and while the prehistoric portion is entirely ignored, the rest is not what, the researches and contributions of scholars during the last quarter of a century to the ethnology and linguistry of the country, led us to expect on the final revision of the work.

The efforts to Christianize and civilize them are widely scattered; those of the French graphically told; those of Massachusetts greatly exaggerated, and given so confusedly as to create a false impression, for while the reader is led to suppose that nearly all the Indians were won over, it is evident that the only natives under mission influence were those of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, and the seven villages near Boston, in all, probably, one-quarter of the Indians in the colony, and of these, a comparatively small proportion learned to read and write.

The first part, devoted to the history of the colonial period, is the most brilliant and romantic part of our national story; it is all included within the two volumes of the new edition. In them, too, opens the story of the Revolution, with its antecedents.

The inter-colonial wars, beginning with the accession of William III., arrayed the English colonies in arms against those of France and Spain. In spite of the efforts of Canada to obtain neutrality, or, at least, to confine the hostility to civilized combatants, Indians were employed.

The last chapters of the colonial history give the settlement of Louisiana and Georgia, the attempts to conquer Canada, the waste of blood and means in successive attempts. A general turmoil pervaded the continent: Natchez and Chickasaws at the South, and Foxes at the North, rose against the French; Tuscaroras against the English in the South; the Yamasees used their arms against English and Spaniards in turn. The colonies all suffered

by war, and by the trade regulations prompted by English jealousy; they were burthened, too, with heavy war debts.

The consolidation and growth of the colonies under the rule of the House of Hanover, are narrated with clearness and vigor. Corrupt officers sent over to prey on the colonists, American industry restricted and interfered with; the constant attacks on the charters, and resolute determination on the part of England to obtain a revenue from America, fill up the picture. The voice of the people found expression in the public press, and Benjamin Franklin becomes a leader of public opinion.

At this period German emigration gave strength, while the slave trade, developed by English mercantile greed, became an element of weakness, the seed of a future war.

The colonial period closes with a well-told account of the capture of Louisburg by New England men, in itself a forecast of the spirit and determination of the colonists.

But France was only roused to vigorous, though tardy exertions, to retain her hold in North America. She endeavored to close in at Acadia on the English colonies; to occupy Lake Champlain, the head-waters of the St. Lawrence on both sides, Niagara, and the line of the Allegheny River. The colonies took alarm; and while England and her colonies were alike interested in repelling the French, there was distrust where there should have been harmony and unity.

"England's colonial policy was destroying itself. The same motive which prevailed to restrain colonial commerce and pursuits, urged England to encroach on the possessions of France, that the future inhabitants of still larger regions might fall under English rule and pay tribute to English industry. In the mercantile system lay the seeds of a war with France for territory, and with America for independence."

Hostilities began on land by the banks of the Messagouche, and at sea by the capture of a French brigantine off Cape Sable, in 1750. That same year Christopher Gist started from the Potomac to explore the territory on the Ohio, which Virginia claimed as part of her domain. Westward to the clans of the Miamis was the influence of England extended. But the British ministry, absorbed by intrigues at home, gave little heed to the glorious country beyond the Alleghenies. Having failed in the attempt to subject the colonies by act of Parliament to all future orders of the king, the "lords of trade sought to gain the same end in detail."

"Every province shunned the charge of securing the valley of the Ohio. Of the Virginia company the means were limited. The Assembly of Pennsylvania, from motives of economy, refused to ratify the treaty which Croghan had negotiated at Piqua." The

French were alive to their danger and showed active energy. Celoron traversed Ohio, French vessels secured Lake Ontario, Niagara became a fortress. "Everything portended a conflict between England and France along their frontiers in America."

The English colonies began to talk of a union. "A voluntary union, entered into by the colonies themselves, would be preferable to one imposed by Parliament."

In 1753 Duquesne, the governor of Canada, pushed forward troops, colonial levies, and Indians, to secure the Ohio. Then, sanctioned by orders from the king, Dinwiddie, of Virginia, resolved to "send a person of distinction to the commander of the French forces on the Ohio River, to know his reasons for invading the British dominions, while a solid peace subsisted." The envoy whom he selected was George Washington.

The narrative hurries on from Washington's visit to the French forts at Venango and Le Bœuf; his return at the head of an armed force, the encounter with Jumonville, his capitulation at Great Meadows. "The English garrison, retaining all its effects, but leaving hostages, withdrew from the basin of the Ohio. In the valley of the Mississippi no standard floated but that of France."

"Hope might dawn from Albany. There, on the nineteenth day of June, 1754, assembled the memorable Congress of Commissioners from every colony north of the Potomac." "America had never seen an assembly so venerable for the States that were represented, or for the great and able men who composed it. Every voice declared a union of all the colonies to be absolutely necessary; and the experienced Hutchinson, of Massachusetts, proud of having rescued that colony from thraldom to paper money; Hopkins, a patriot of Rhode Island; the wise and faithful Pitkin, of Connecticut; Tasker, of Maryland; the liberal Smith, of New York; and Franklin, the most benignant of statesmen, were deputed to prepare a constitution for a permanent confederacy of the continent; but Franklin had already projected a plan, and had brought the heads of it with him."

Thus a union was forced on the colonies by England and France, and the plan of the future government of the United States began to take form.

Mr. Bancroft sketches clearly here the condition and strength of each of the colonies at this time, but concludes it by a eulogy of New England Calvinism, that seems as unsound as it is misplaced. A system which imposed on the many the mere opinions of a few, and, claiming for all the right of private judgment, punished dissent with death; which denied a divinely constituted ministry and set up a human one; which created a religion without a single essential element of latreia, and yet made attendance

on its services imperative under penalties, can claim no respect from a logical mind. No one can adhere to it without degrading his manhood. If God has established no church which man is bound to obey, no worship which man is to offer, man is free—no one without a direct warrant from God can require his obedience. In more senses than he avows Calvinism was revolutionary.

Braddock's career in America is graphically told, and the almost contemporaneous crime committed on the Acadians, while depicted with feeling, omits the important point that, as most of the Acadians were born under the British flag, they were treated as British subjects. The oaths they were required to take were oaths renouncing the Catholic religion, and they were punished expressly as "Popish recusants." The author can apply the term "merciless bigotry" to Louis XIV., or the Archbishop of Salzburg, but when Catholics are sufferers, no such epithet is applied to men of old and New England, who, without any warrant of law, confiscated the whole property of seven thousand harmless people, and carried them off to be cast as paupers along an unfriendly coast.

It is more pleasant to read the account of Dieskau's disastrous campaign; of Montcalm's brilliant capture of Oswego and William Henry; then another pæan of Protestantism ushers in the story of Frederick the Great's victories, and we return to America to follow Wolfe from Louisburg to the banks of the St. Lawrence, where Montcalm, after a victory over Abercrombie at Ticonderoga, abandoned by his monarch, in a destitute and exhausted province, prepared to make his last desperate stand. The defeat of the French army, the surrender of the famishing town of Quebec, the reduction of the whole province of Canada, and of the insurgent Cherokees at the South, brings the second volume to a close, and shows England in complete possession of the Northern continent from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, and from Florida to the Arctic Ocean.

"During the negotiations for peace, the French minister for foreign affairs had frankly warned the British envoy, that the cession of Canada would lead to the early independence of North America. Unintimidated by the prophecy, England happily persisted. So soon as the sagacious and experienced Vergennes, the French ambassador at Constantinople, a grave, laborious man, remarkable for a calm temper and moderation of character, heard the conditions of the treaty, he said to his friends, and even openly to a British traveller, and afterwards himself recalled his prediction to the notice of the British ministry: 'The consequences of the entire cession of Canada are obvious. I am persuaded England will ere long repent of having removed the only check that could keep her colonies in awe. They stand no longer in need of her protec-

tion; she will call on them to contribute toward supporting the burdens they have helped to bring on her, and they will answer by striking off all dependence.' "

Mr. Bancroft concludes the epoch with the words: "England became not so much the possessor of the valley of the West as the trustee, commissioned to transfer it from the France of the Middle Ages to the free people who were making for humanity a new life in America."

To many this period, the preliminary of our Revolution, with the stirring struggle for the overthrow of French power, with all its merits, proves less interesting from the manner in which European affairs, opinions of statesmen in America and England, and the narrative of colonial internal affairs, are blended in fragments with the military operations, forming a mosaic, in which not all can readily trace the figures.

To criticize a work which has had an established reputation for more than a generation is a bold task; and the more so when, to such an historic task as that before us, the author brings a love of country that can be impartial, unwearied research, a sound judgment, and a mind of no ordinary gifts in conceiving the great drama, or presenting it with beauty. The task is all the greater to one who recognizes in him a master and a guide, one who gave his youthful studies their bent, and made them ever since devoted to the history of the country. Nay, more, to one who received from him encouragement and approval, when there were few to bestow it, and when coming from him it was a reward not to be forgotten. And not only encouragement came but aid, in counsel, in frequent imparting of material acquired in researches in avenues open to no scholar but himself.

But addressing the circle of those who adhere to the only logical Christian faith and Church, a deference to truth, and that only, has compelled the utterance of remarks as frankly as they would have been expressed to the author himself, and conscious, that to the public at large, and especially to the great body of those who claim descent from New England, no words of the writer can alter the verdict as to Bancroft's *History of the United States*, a monument as lasting as any man could rear in life to keep his memory alive in coming generations.

MARTIN LUTHER.

Dr. Martin Luther's *Briefe*, Senschreiben und Bedenken . . . . bearbeitet Von Dr. Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette. 5 vols. 8vo. Berlin, 1825.

The Life of Martin Luther. Compiled from reliable sources. By Rev. William Stang. New York, F. Pustet & Co., 1883. 12mo. 112 pp.

NEARLY three-quarters of a century ago the monarch of the Scandinavian kingdom of Denmark summoned the Protestant world to do honor to Martin Luther; and now another potentate, fresh from the Canossa to which he has been led by his boastful premier, the man of blood and iron, muezzin-like renews the call. Germany and Scandinavia again strive to do homage to Luther; statues, addresses, medals, will mark the epoch; a ripple will be seen in this country, but in England and other Protestant lands not even a ripple seems to be discernible. A certain lack of human freedom, a certain tinge of absolute power seems necessary to fit man for a complete appreciation of Martin Luther.

The attention thus called to Luther makes it necessary for Catholics at large to know and understand what the real Luther was, and to distinguish him from the false ideal which will everywhere be presented to a deluded public in these days. The Rev. Mr. Stang's brief sketch of the reformer will be a ready means of giving Catholics a true knowledge of the character and acts of the man.

Luther is the boast of Protestantism, little more than a boast, yet the only man in the great apostasy of the sixteenth century whom its adherents can use to arouse popular enthusiasm. In the history of the Church heresiarchs generally have been men of great intellect, framers of a system with symmetry and form, men removed from the busy world, holding to their theories with unwavering earnestness. They were men who could find followers to sway the masses, but could not themselves evoke personal enthusiasm. But in Luther came a man with no system, who said and unsaid with equal vehemence, who appealed to the lowest passions of the masses, and gave the widest scope to sensuality, by decking it in a flimsy cloak of sentimentality and calling it a religion.

Loud, boisterous, fond of good cheer, good company and indulgence, he stands out with a kind of personal attractiveness that

arouses a sympathetic feeling that for three centuries and a half has made him a rallying-point among those who revolted from the Catholic Church with the cry, " Non serviam."

It is not easy to understand how a man so gross and sensual, so vacillating and uncertain in doctrines, so full of contempt for almost everything that had for centuries been regarded with reverence, could have been instrumental or influential in leading any large number of intelligent Catholics out of the Church ; and it is really only the fact that he was so instrumental that makes intelligent men in our day continue to render him a form of hero worship.

Three centuries and a half have reduced the amount of Christianity in the various reformed churches to a very slight remnant. While the Church stands as it did then, with its Papal and hierarchical system, its creed, its worship, its evangelical counsels, ever creating lives devoted to sanctification, to the relief of ignorance and poverty, of all human woes and miseries, Protestantism, in the Germany of Luther and the Switzerland of Calvin, has reached the uttermost rationalism, the existence of God is barely recognized, the inspiration, authenticity and creditableness of the Scriptures, which they made the sole rule of faith, are impugned in pulpit, university and literature ; the idea of a church founded by Christ, with a worship, a priesthood, a deposit of faith, is scouted ; the fall of man, the need of redemption, atonement, are denied. But whether they retain nothing of Christianity but the name, or very little except the name, we see them ever ready to extol the name of Martin Luther. The advocate of arbitrary power, the man who would crush the people beneath the iron heel of Cæsarism, the Nihilist and Communist who would annihilate all government and with it the whole social system, alike render homage to the name of Martin Luther. It is not that the man in himself was entitled to respect, but simply as the popular type of the movement which wrested country after country from Catholicity. Men may throw away all Christianity, like your infidel and agnostic, or veil it under a mask of rationalism, or fritter it away, but on one point they all agree, as to that there is no division of sentiment, and that is blind hatred of and opposition to the Catholic Church, and as the symbol of this, nothing suits them all better than Martin Luther.

Thus Froude, who certainly has a minimum of Christianity, is now the eulogist of Luther, and ends a rhapsody by declaring " that any faith, any piety, is alive now in Europe, even in the Roman Church itself . . . . is due in large measure to the poor miner's son, who was born in a Saxon village four hundred years ago."

He was born in a Saxon village of a violent race, born in a village to which his father fled after slaying a fellow-man. Accord-

ing to his mother's statement, he came into the world on the 10th of November, and, so far as she could recollect in later years, in 1483. After learning the rudiments at home, he became a poor scholar at Eisenach, hospitably sheltered by the Cotta family. He was a lover of books, and at last entered the university of Erfurt.

Here he found professors, some at least of whom were imbued with the doctrines of Wicklif and Huss. The press was already disseminating books through Germany, and the universities and monasteries were the earliest purchasers. It was in the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt that the young student first saw a complete printed Bible, one of several purchased by the house, some of the numerous editions that had poured from the press in Latin and in German.[1]

He was twenty years old when he took his degree in philosophy. While pursuing further studies with a view of becoming a professor of law, the death of a comrade, killed by a lightning-stroke at his side, made him suddenly resolve to renounce the world. At nightfall he knocked at the portal of the Augustinian convent, and begged admission. He was received, renouncing his insignia of master, resisting alike the entreaties of his scholars and the anger of his father. He entered on his novitiate with great fervor, but was often in deep melancholy and despondency. That he might be a reprobate was the one overpowering thought. Fasting, austerities, prayer, the counsels of confessors and directors, nothing brought peace to his mind, even after his religious profession and his ordination as a priest, till a passage in St. Bernard on the Annunciation gave his thoughts a new direction. He passed from the depths of despair to the heights of presumption. He believed himself justified in the sight of God by the merits of Christ, and by the very force of his infallible conviction one of the elect.

But doubts recurred, and a mind of real ability, unhinged by interior trials, unbalanced by exact learning, and already adopting unorthodox views, was stimulated to pride by the reputation he had acquired. When, after a visit to Rome, where the pomp of the court and much that he saw gave a shock to the plain Augustinian from a German village, he was appointed professsor in the newly founded university at Wittenberg, he began to teach philosophy. His knowledge was but elementary; he hated the Aristotelian philosophy, and the whole system of the schoolmen, including

[1] At the Caxton Exhibition in London, in 1878, there were sixty copies of different Bibles, printed in Latin or in German, all dating prior to the year 1503, when Luther attained his twentieth year Of course this did not represent every edition issued; but at all events there was the distinct proof that the whole Bible had been set up and printed sixty-two times at least between 1450 and 1503. Yet doubtless in the present Luther revival, hundreds will declare that Luther never saw a Bible till after he was a priest, and was then utterly astonished to find that such a book existed.

St. Thomas. An exact logical system was always something abhorrent to him, and to which he could not submit. His lectures were brilliant tirades against the very philosophy which he was appointed to teach. He was also assigned to preach in the town, and he soon became popular. In the sermons of Luther at this time, as they have come down to us, his doctrine of justification by faith alone constantly appears, and as a necessary sequence, the priesthood, sacraments, indulgences, intercessory prayer, fast and pilgrimages are made little of, or directly censured as unavailing.

That a professor in a university just created by the Pope should, in his professor's chair and in the pulpit, pursue this course, shows that in Germany the standard of orthodoxy was very low, and the attachment to the Church and its whole system very feeble. Luther's language apparently received no censure from any superior in his order or in the Church, and no voice was raised to controvert the utterances of the bold young Augustinian. The doctrines of Wicklif and Huss were silently permeating the schools and monasteries.

Germany had been gradually drifting away from unity in government, from unity in faith. The faith spread over the Roman empire, gathering into the fold in time the Celtic nations to the limits of Ireland and Scotland, turned last of all to the Germanic and Scandinavian tribes, and won the Angles, Saxons, and Danes in Britain; the Franks in Gaul conquered to be conquered, who overthrew the Roman Celtic power to yield to the Church. These German tribes sent apostles to other bands of their race, and their rulers employed force. Before the end of the eighth century the Franks forced the Saxons to profess Christianity and receive baptism. They rose in rebellion against a Church which was made, in their eyes, odious and oppressive, but they were crushed. But the work of force went on. Pomerania and the Isle of Rugen, crushed by arms, abandoned their idols and sullenly accepted Christianity as the twelfth century was nearing its close. The first missionary to the Prussians died the death of a martyr in 997, almost at the close of the first millennium of Christianity. Two hundred years later a regular crusade was carried against the fierce pagans of Prussia, who were overcome by the Teutonic knights in 1243, and after a series of insurrections finally crushed forty years later.

Thus for five centuries the work had gone on. In 1300 thousands of Germans were still pagan in heart, though forced to appear outwardly as Catholics. The work of real conversion advanced slowly; and at the opening of the sixteenth century in a general relaxation, religious instruction, the frequentation of the sacraments, the eradicating of superstitions were all neglected, and

in many parts there was little knowledge of Christianity, a longing for the old days of pagan sensual indulgence, a spirit of revolt against the spirit of mortification inculcated by the Church, of which the religious orders, then true to their rule, were the heralds and exemplars. The doctrines of Huss had found a field ready, and were spreading in secret.

The government which had grown up in Germany had, from an early day, shown a stubborn resolve to subject the Church to its will. The bishops and clergy were to be its creatures, dependent on its will; the constitution of the Church was to be moulded by its ideas, and isolated from the Church in other states. England and France occasionally took up the same line of policy, but Germany adhered to it persistently and doggedly.

Christ avowed that he was a king, and his kingdom, though not *of* the world, worldly, was *in* the world, and to abide. He bade his disciples pray for the coming and establishment of that kingdom, the Church. It was to extend to all nations; Christ sent his apostles, not to obtain sanction or investiture from kings and princes, but to teach the nations, to teach the king on his throne and the swineherd in his cot. The nations, as such, were to become disciples and subjects of the kingdom.

The Church, with its papal organization, existing in all lands, in all ages, is the only institution on earth that realizes the conception of this kingdom of God. The German rulers would not acknowledge the Church; the part within their civil rule was to be modelled, guided, ruled, not by the Sovereign Pontiff, but by themselves.

With each state, great and petty, acting on this theory, the Church would be an impossibility; it could be one neither in doctrine nor in ministry, neither in worship nor in practice. It would not be a body corporate, even to the extent of the Freemasons and other similar bodies. It would be a mere bundle of discordant and disjointed members.

In the Catholic conception the supernatural prevailed; the power flowed from above. But in the German idea the supernatural character of the Church was completely ignored; and the Christian had no supernatural character in the eye of the law; he was a mere intelligent animal, to be trained like a horse or a dog, so as to be useful to the state.

From this rose the long struggle with the Popes, and in the German heart there was no homage, no allegiance, no loyalty to the Holy See as the central power in the Church. Abuse of the Popes had been so constant and so common, that it excited no astonishment, evoked no censure.

Wicklif had, like the Minnesingers, attacked with every violence

the religious orders, especially the mendicant friars. From his day, satires and caricatures of monks and friars multiplied, and wit helped to spread the ridicule and contempt thus engendered. Huss and Jerome of Prague had naturalized this policy, as well as Wicklif's spirit of rebellion and heresy in Germany.

The religious orders, instituted and designed to aid the parochial clergy and bishops, by the example of a stricter life, by instructing the more ignorant and neglected, became too frequently, by relaxation, a source of scandal, instead of an auxiliary power. The libels launched against them gained double force from every scandal.

The period of fervent orthodox Catholicity in Germany thus narrows down to a very brief period, and in no part of Christendom was the old underlying heathendom, with its deification of sensuality, stronger, or the supernatural element weaker.

With a government thus hostile to the Church as a kingdom, with a people thus long severed in heart from the papacy, to which human freedom and man's emancipation owes so much, with thousands still clinging to old pagan memories, and longing to be freed from the requirements of Christianity, with weakness in the Church itself, it needed but some trivial incident to call into play all these agencies and sweep Catholicity aside.

If we figure to ourselves the country as perfectly, earnestly Catholic, attached to the Holy See, instructed in the faith and exemplary in the observance of God's law and the frequentation of the sacraments, a revolt and apostasy like that of the sixteenth century is an impossibility. But where people had long been taught to look upon the head of the Church as an enemy, we can see that any one who rose to pour on the name of the Pope every filthy and obscene epithet that a bestial nature could suggest, would not meet strong censure from any, but would be hailed with guffaws by the crowd. The same mob would hail with delight any one who promised sensual indulgence.

The country and the time were ripe for a pagan revival, and Luther, whose mind had been straying more and more widely from the standard of othodoxy, unsustained by any sound theological basis, needed only a pretext to begin the war.

Men were drifting away from orthodoxy in many parts; each petty scholar aimed to do himself, unaided, the work of reform which councils of the Church were struggling to accomplish. Among these men, Luther had a wide correspondence, and to them he wrote freely. Hatred of the Pope, of the religious orders, of the trammels of religion, inspired them all; and all seemed to recognize the fact that Luther, from his exemplary life as a religious and a priest, from his position as professor in a university,

and from his eloquence, which had already been recognized, would be the best possible leader in the eyes of the people. They recognized his ability for their purpose, his obstinacy and violence; but we see by his letters that he did not work alone. Thus, in 1520, sending one of his treatises to Spalatinus, he says: "I beg you polish up all carefully with well-used file. I was oppressed with some unaccountable trouble of mind when writing them. I will show them to other friends before they are published."

Then came the jubilee granted by Pope Leo X., in which the alms, usually given on such occasions, was to be devoted to the erection of St. Peter's at Rome. The Archbishop of Mentz confided the preaching of this jubilee to John Tetzel, a Dominican friar, of known learning. Toward the close of the year 1517, the jubilee preacher reached Juterbock, a town within a few miles of Wittenberg, and crowds gathered to hear him.

Luther announced that he would preach on indulgences, and, shutting himself up in his cell for several days, prepared his discourse. He admits that he had never studied the question of indulgence, and began by denying that satisfaction was part of the sacrament of penance. He denied that anything beyond contrition was needed for the remission of sin. This denial of temporal punishment for sin, and the necessity of it as satisfaction for sin, of course left no place for any indulgence or commutation of it. As he denied the indulgence to be of any avail to the living, he also declared it to be fruitless when applied to the dead. He maintained that even after receiving the sacrament of penance, the gaining of an indulgence plunged the Christian back into the filth of his sin. With tirades against the schoolmen, he urged his hearers to disregard indulgences, and give any alms they had to spare, not to the building of St. Peter's, but to the poor. The famous sermon that opened the war on the Church is a specimen of Luther's style. There is no accurate reasoning, no grasp of the subject, but plenty of violent declamation. Tetzel's reply was the plain, distinct utterance of a theologian. Luther's retort was characteristic: "I laugh at your words as I do at the braying of an ass; instead of water I recommend to you the juice of the grape; and instead of fire, inhale, my friend, the smell of a roast goose. I am at Wittenberg. I, Doctor Martin Luther, make it known to all inquisitors of the faith, bullies and rock-splitters, that I enjoy here abundant hospitality, an open house, a well-supplied table, and marked attention; thanks to the liberality of our duke and prince, the Elector of Saxony."

Can any man believe such a one to be raised up by God to guide men in the way of salvation?

Many suppose, from the exaggerated statements of Protestant

writers, that Father Tetzel ignorantly or wilfully misrepresented the nature of indulgences, and sold them as pardons for sins. The nature of indulgences was, however, clearly defined in ordinary manuals for the use of the clergy, then in print, such as the *Discipulus de Eruditione Christi Fidelium*, issued at Cologne in 1504, where contrition and confession are laid down as absolutely necessary to the valid gaining of an indulgence, as well as the performance of the prescribed acts. Tetzel's sermons are in print, with his announcement of the jubilee; and they all make contrition and confession a requisite. Nor does Luther in his sermon accuse Tetzel of misstating or misrepresenting Catholic doctrine; he himself attacks the Catholic doctrine of the necessity of satisfaction in conjunction with contrition.

With a hypocrisy that does not generally rank as a mark of sanctity or divine mission, Luther at once wrote to three different bishops, apologizing for his sermon. He did not in this correspondence accuse Tetzel of error, but complained of the error into which his words led weak minds. The Bishop of Brandenburg urged him not to print his sermon; Luther said in reply: "I am well content,"[1] but he nevertheless did print it. He had determined to follow up the subject, and, at midnight, on the last day of October, 1517, the porter of the Augustinian monastery posted on the outer pillars of the Church of All Saints ninety-five theses prepared by Luther.

In the popular literature of our day these are represented as learned objections to the whole system of Catholic truth and discipline. The whole ninety-five bear on indulgences, but scarcely one raises a solid objection. Some are inconsistent with others; some merely satirical cuts at the Holy See; some are merely puerile.

In the short time since his sermon he had changed his views. In the sermon he said: "I maintain that it is impossible to prove from the Scripture that divine justice demands from the sinner any other penance or satisfaction than reformation of the heart; and that it in no part enjoins concurrence of acts or deeds;" but his third thesis asserts: "And He (Christ) does not mean (by 'do penance') an inward repentance merely, which is insufficient unless accompanied by mortification of the flesh."

In his letter to the Archbishop of Mentz he had said: "For man does not become assured of his salvation by any episcopal act, since he cannot become secure by the infused grace of God, and the apostle commands us to work out incessantly our own salvation in fear and trembling, and that even the just can scarcely

[1] De Wette, Dr. Martin Luther's Briefe, i., p. 71.

be saved."[1] His nineteenth thesis declares: "The souls in purgatory are not assured of their salvation, however we who are on earth may be certain of it." Strange medley! For how can men in life, before Christ pronounces judgment on them, be certain that they are elect, and the souls of the departed who are already judged and not in hell, not know certainly that they are not damned when they had already been certain in life!

The thirty-eighth and seventy-first theses read: "We must not undervalue the pardon of the Pope, which is, *as I have said*, a declaration of divine forgiveness." "Whoever speaks against the truth of the apostolic pardon, let him be anathema."

Yet while he thus openly challenged any one to controvert the authority of the Pope to grant indulgences, and took the Catholic side, he showed his usual instability or hypocrisy in his correspondence. Thus, soon after he wrote to his friend Spalatinus: "Yet I will say two things, first, to *you alone, and our friends*, until the thing is published, that it seems to me now that there is nothing in indulgences except an illusion of souls, and that they are absolutely good for nothing, except to those who snore and are torpid in the way of Christ."

He either put forward these two theses as a blind, to enable him to claim orthodoxy, or was ready to-day to refute as heresy what yesterday he offered to defend as orthodox.

As soon as these theses were circulated, the charge was made that they had been drawn up by Luther, at the command of Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, or, at least, to gratify that prince, in order to annoy and attack the Archbishop of Mentz, by whom the jubilee had been proclaimed in Germany. This appears from Luther's own letters, for he tells Spalatinus that he took care that those who might think any part of the theses applied to them, should receive copies before any were seen in the hands of the Grand Duke or his court. (De Wette, i., p. 70; see also 92, 93.)

Yet, in the following March, addressing Christopher Scheuer, of Nuremberg, one not in the immediate circle, and whose respect he evidently desired to retain, he declared: "It was not my intention or wish to disseminate them, but first to confer as to them with a few residing near and around us, so that, if condemned by the judgment of the many, they might be suppressed, or, if approved, published." (De Wette, i., p. 95.)

The constant hypocrisy appears again, for it was one thing to submit theses to a few private friends for their opinion, before publication, and a very different thing to do what Luther really did, post them, on the eve of a great holiday of the year, on the doors

[1] De Wette, Dr. Martin Luther's Briefe, i., p. 68.

of a church to which the Pope had granted special indulgences only a few years before. That occasion and that church had called, if ever, for a due and proper exposition of the doctrine of indulgences by the fathers of the Augustinian convent, and if they had left the people so ill-instructed as to their nature and the mode of making them aids to a holy life, Luther and his associates were to blame.

The theses were posted up, and they were a summons to war against the Church; they were widely disseminated, and became the topic of the hour with all who were eager for change. Luther soon after visited several cities of Germany, putting forth new propositions, each wilder than those preceding, like those at Heidelberg, where he maintained: "All the works of the just are mortal sins. There is no moral virtue without pride or dejection, that is, without sin. We are not made just by work."

The theologians met him with the close arguments of the schools, but Luther had no idea of dialectics, and despised them. His answer was violent vituperation; he loaded his antagonist with vile epithets, and rattled off, as his school have generally done since his day, in general abuse of the Church. "Come then to the point," he cried, "Aristarchuses, scholastics, hobgoblins, worms of earth, show forth and parade all the brilliancy of your learning."

As he sought to reach the masses, he soon dropped Latin, and wrote almost exclusively in German. As he went on, his violence and his boldness increased; dogma after dogma was attacked, yet he kept saying: "I dispute, I do not assert, and I dispute with fear." He even endeavored to secure the countenance of bishops, and had the hardihood to address in obsequious terms the Bishop of Brandenburg, whom he had so grossly deceived.

Of immense industry, he sent out Commentaries on the Lord's Prayer and on the Seven Penitential Psalms, and similar devotional tracts, as well as controversies, but all were imbued with the underlying principles with which he had begun, the sufficiency of faith alone for salvation, and the restriction of belief to such dogmas only as he could find clearly laid down in such books of Scripture as he chose to admit. His tracts were eagerly bought, and the presses issued them in large numbers.

Accused of heresy on all sides, by sound theologians, Luther, who had the support of princes, nobles, robber knights, and the debauched scholars, thought that he could gain the favor of Rome. But the Emperor Maximilian entreated the Pope to suppress the vain disputations which were unsettling the faith, and must inevitably entail disastrous results. Leo X., who, from the first reports, considered Luther's doings merely an outgrowth of the ordinary rivalry between religious orders, had, in August, 1518, ordered

the Bishop of Ascoli to summon Luther to appear at Rome within sixty days, to answer before judges appointed by His Holiness, in regard to the doctrines which he had put forth. The Pope instructed Cardinal Cajetan, his legate in Germany, in case Luther disobeyed the citation, to call upon the Emperor and princes to put a stop to his course till his orthodoxy had been inquired into.

Luther was still a Catholic priest, saying mass at Catholic altars and maintaining that he was sound in the faith. Yet he knew that the doctrines which he had been putting forth were contrary to the known and definite teachings of the Church. "I do not yet clearly see," he writes to Spalatinus, "in what way I can avoid the intended censures, unless the Prince comes to my aid. On the other hand, I would rather live under perpetual censure than have the Prince incur any reproach on my account. I have offered myself; believe and persuade others, as far as you wish or think it advisable, that I do so offer myself. I will never be a heretic; I may have erred in disputing; but I wish to establish nothing for myself, nor, on the other hand, do I wish to be a slave to the opinions of men." He had already written to Spalatinus to invoke the Prince's aid, and he now continues, in his eagerness to avoid going or being sent to Rome, to give an account of his doctrine. "To our learned and prudent friends, it seems best for me to ask our prince Frederick for a safe conduct through his states. If he refuses it, as I know he will, I shall have a very just exception and excuse for not appearing at Rome. If, therefore, you will in my name ask our illustrious Prince for a rescript, refusing me a safe conduct, and leaving me to my own risk, if I choose to go, you will serve me exceedingly, but you must act promptly; time is passing and the appointed day is approaching."

He boasted of his courage,[1] and in these days the boast will be repeated by his admirers, but the preceding gives us no very exalted idea of it. He vacillated and hesitated, and finally the University of Wittenberg, on their side, wrote to the Pope, and the Elector Frederick on his side wrote to the Pope's legate, to request that Luther might be permitted to proceed to Augsburg instead of to Rome for the purpose of giving an account of the doctrines which he had advanced.

He had on Trinity Sunday (May 30th) written to the Pope himself to justify his course, and with his wonted disingenuousness had said of his theses and strange doctrines: "They are disputations, not doctrines, not dogmas, set out as usual in an enigmatical

[1] He was brave when he knew he was safe. "I had no fear of their censures, as I was safe in the midst of Germany." Letter to Spalatinus, Aug. 23d, 1520. (De Wette, i., p. 480.)

form ; yet could I have foreseen it, I should certainly have taken part on my side, that they should be more easy to understand."

"Were I such a man as they wish me to appear, and all things had not been rightly handled by me in the course of disputation, it could not be that the most illustrious Prince Frederick, Duke of Saxony, Elector of the Empire, would permit such a pest in his university, pre-eminent as he is for his attachment to the Catholic apostolic truth."

"Wherefore, most blessed Father, I offer myself prostrate at the feet of thy Holiness, with all that I am and have; quicken, slay, call, recall, approve, reprove, as shall please thee. I recognize thy voice as that of Christ abiding and speaking in thee. If I deserve death, I do not refuse to die."

Fénelon could not have expressed more complete submission to the judgment of the Apostolic See; it remains to see whether Luther's actions corresponded to his language.

He set out for Augsburg with the sympathy of his many friends and students. He reached that city wearied and ill, as he tells us. On being received at a Carmelite convent he notified the Nuncio of his arrival, but would not appear before him until a safe conduct from the Emperor arrived. He had resolved not to retract. "I should prefer to die, and, what is a greater punishment, be forever deprived of your delightful society," he wrote to Melanchthon, "than retract what is well said, and be an occasion for losing the fruit of our excellent studies." (De Wette, i., p. 146.)

At last Luther, attended by his friends, proceeded to the legate. Cardinal Cajetan received him with all kindness. Luther professed a willingness to disavow any expressions, if the legate convinced him that they were erroneous, but the Nuncio was not to be led into any dispute. He told the wilful man that he was there to receive his renunciation of his errors, not to argue. "What error have I taught?" asked Luther. Cardinal Cajetan presented two errors. 1st. "That the merits of Christ are not the treasure of indulgences." 2d. "That faith alone is sufficient for justification." He showed decisions of the Holy See covering the ground, and again called on Luther to renounce his errors; he asked three days to reply, but returned the next day with a protest, offering to submit his writings to the judgment of the Holy Father, and the universities of Basle, Fribourg, Louvain, and Paris. This he followed up by an elaborate defence, and when Cajetan found him obstinate, he said, "Do not return again. All is ended."

Yet the Nuncio wished to save the unfortunate man. He urged Staupitz and Linke to counsel submission to their friend, and, moved by them, Luther, on the 17th of October, wrote to Cardinal Cajetan, "I am affected, repentant. Henceforward I promise

you, my Father, to speak and act quite differently by God's assistance. I shall speak no more upon indulgences, provided you impose silence on all those who have brought me into this painful position."

"As to the retractation, my reverend and kind Father, which you and our Vicar demand so earnestly, my conscience in no wise permits me to make it, and nothing in the world, orders, counsels, or the voice of friendship, can make me speak or act against my conscience."

"I entreat you, therefore, with all humility, to refer this cause before our Holy Father, Pope Leo X., to the end that the Church may pronounce on what must be believed or rejected. I desire nothing else than to hear and follow the Church." (De Wette, i., p. 163.)

Even this slight step toward submission was too much for his pride. He at once prepared an appeal, and leaving it to be posted, fled in haste at night, guided by a peasant. In a letter to the Nuncio, he declared that he appealed even "from the Pope ill informed to the Pope better informed" (De Wette, i., p. 164). He drew up his appeal and then prepared a further appeal to a future council. An appeal to three courts in succession before there had been any decision, was certainly a strange course of proceeding. He denounced the Brief of Leo X. "It is incredible that anything so monstrous can issue from the Sovereign Pontiff, especially Leo X. Whoever then the scamp is that proposes to frighten me with such a decree in the name of Leo X., let him understand that I do understand nonsense, or if it really emanated from the Curia, I will teach them their most impudent temerity and wicked ignorance." (De Wette, i., p. 166.)

The same farce was enacted when Miltitz, in the name of the Pope, endeavored to recall Luther. There were the same outward professions of respect and submission, while to his friends he showed his stubborn resolve to retract nothing, and his utter contempt for all the constituted authorities of the Church. It was not till the dispute with Eck that he was forced to admit his doctrines were those of Huss, condemned at Constance, and then he insisted that a general council could err, shocking even the Elector Frederick, his constant friend. While deluding the Catholics and addressing the Emperor Charles V. in specious terms of submission, he began to denounce the Pope as Antichrist.

Pope Leo X. at last, in the Bull *Exsurge Domine et judica causam tuam*, issued June 15th, 1520, condemned forty-one propositions extracted from Luther's writings, and excommunicated him, if he did not retract before the lapse of sixty days. This Bull was formally published in some parts of Germany, derided in others, and burned by Luther, who, instead of submitting, wrote a treatise

denouncing it as a bull of Antichrist. The comparison of these two documents is in itself enough to condemn Luther. No unbiassed mind can read the fatherly, mild and temperate words of the Pope who seeks to win back an erring son, and not feel that the Spirit of God in his Church breathes through them; while Luther's seem prompted by the Spirit of Evil, and are utterly irreconcilable with the ideal of a Christian Church.

The universities to which he had appealed all condemned him, and thus condemned by the Pope and the universities, he ceased to be a Catholic. At the Diet of Worms he again poses as a hero; but he was not bold until he knew that he was safe under the protection of the Elector of Saxony, and the promised help of Franz von Sickingen, Count Schaumburg, Hartmuth von Kromberg, and other noble ruffians and titled highwaymen, of whom the very Emperor and the assembled states stood in awe, in their inability to repress their high-handed murders and robberies. Safe in their support, Luther at Worms refused even to submit to the decision of a general council, and was put under the ban of the empire; but it could not be enforced; and when the Diet of Nuremberg met, many princes were already Lutherans, and Catholicity had lost its hold in several states. They had become a "twofold Bohemia." (Luther in De Wette, i., p. 464.)

Luther set to work to give form to Protestantism, but every village had among the apostate monks and priests some reformer who refused to listen to him, but claimed a right to frame a religion of his own. This took its most terrible form in the Peasants' War, led by Thomas Münzer. They drew their doctrines from Luther's writings, but his attitude towards them presents him in a new aspect, that of a cruel and relentless oppressor. "They ought to be choked like mad dogs," he says. "Give the ass his fodder, burdens and the cudgel, says the wise man; give the peasants their oat-straw, and if they are not satisfied, give them stripes and musket-balls. Mercy will do them no good; let artillery rattle among them, or they will do a thousand times worse. Even to pity them is to deny and blaspheme God, and to try to pull Him down out of heaven. They ought to be choked like mad dogs." Fearing that Albert, Count of Mansfield, might deal mildly with them, he anxiously begs of Ruhel, one of his counsellors, to do what he can to prevent it. He exhorts every one to come to the rescue, to take up arms against the peasants, "to strike, stab, and slay, as best he can, and if he die in this holy crusade he will have a happy death."[1]

This was against his own deluded followers. Of course against

[1] Four Lay Sermons, Lancaster, 1879, pp. 42–3, citing De Wette, i., p. 465–480; ii., pp. 669–670.

Catholics he was equally violent. "O that Charles were a man and would attack these Satans for Christ's sake!" he cried, on receiving the Bull of Leo X. (De Wette, i., p. 494.) Again: "I rejoice that Hutten has sallied out, and would that he might intercept Marinus and Aleandro." (Ib., p. 50.)

We have seen in our time the mob in Russia rising on the Jews. These Muscovites have drawn down on themselves the sternest reprobation in many countries where Luther is held in honor. Yet "Luther cordially hated the Jews, and advocated their ill treatment on principle. Not content with calling them by the most opprobrious names (ass-heads, lying mouths, devil's children, devils, young devils damned to hell), he consoles himself with the thought that they will be tormented, not in upper hell, nor in middle hell, but in hell's deepest depths. He tells us how they ought to be treated by Christian princes; how he would treat them, if he had the power.

"In the first place, he would burn every synagogue or school of theirs, and invite Christians to help the flames by throwing in pitch, brimstone and hell fire, if possible. Next, he would raze their houses to the ground; to sleep under a shed or in a stable is good enough for them. He would likewise take away from them their books, prayer-books, and Talmudist writings, and all their Bibles; not a leaf must be left to them. Finally he would imitate the good example set in France, and by our dear (Emperor) Charles in Bohemia and Spain, and drive them out of Germany, after depriving them of the wealth which they had stolen from Christians by their usury. So long as they are with us, or on our soil, they must not be allowed to praise or thank God or pray. They must not mention God's name in presence of a Christian. But it is better to hunt them out like mad dogs, that we may not partake of their sins and damnation."[1]

The hatred of the Jews seemed to increase with his years, and the very last sermon that he delivered breathes the same spirit of violence. And yet we shall hear him extolled as the highest type of a tolerant mind.

Luther was now out of the pale of the Church. At his instigation and by his counsel, monks, nuns and friars had abandoned their cloisters and married, carrying off what they could; priests had in the same way violated their vows. Mass ceased to be said in many parts, or was said as each one's fancy dictated; princes seized the Church property and divided it among their courtiers. The parts of Germany to which the influence of Luther and his colaborers had extended were in a singular state. Religion was in

[1] Four Lay Sermons, citing Luther's Works (Erlangen edn.), xxxii., pp. 234, 238, 252–3, 259.

a perfect chaos. There was no settled doctrine, no recognized public worship of God, no regularly constituted clergy, but swarms of self-appointed preachers. Christianity, as it had been planted in Germany by Boniface, Virgil, Wilfrid, was abolished. In some countries of the world the pretence might be made that there was a Christianity there preceding the Roman system; for Germany no such pretence could be made. Its apostles were monks, and introduced the monastic life; they were sent by the Pope, and from the outset acknowledged the Sovereign Pontiff as the ultimate judge in matters of faith and discipline, as their ecclesiastical superior, the source from which their authority was derived. The public worship they introduced was the mass, in the language and according to the rite of Rome.

Yet the people generally clung to the faith. "Only for the princes and nobles," wrote Luther (Walch 1, 2444), "we should not remain long. Let us pray for the Prince Elector that he may preserve the Church." "If I wished," he says elsewhere, "I could easily, with two or three sermons, make my people turn back to the Papacy and cause new pilgrimages and masses." "I know in truth that there are scarcely ten in Wittenberg, whom I could not seduce, if I would again use such holiness as I used when a monk under the Papacy." (Works, 6, 280, etc., cited in Stang.) He admits that he did away with the mass at the compulsion of the civil power.

In whom was there authority vested to rear up a new Christianity, to form a new scripture, a new faith, a new worship, never before recognized? That any man without direct authority from Almighty God should assume the right to do so, and impose his work on his fellow-men, with no warrant but his own fancy, is one of the most daring things in all human history. That any people should cast aside the Christianity, as originally established in their land, which had prevailed for centuries, and was in harmony with that prevailing throughout Christendom, and dating back beyond all civil institutions, cast it all aside and submit to creed and worship and ministry framed by men no better than themselves, and in many points men that the upright must have despised, is still more astounding. That men should submit to such degradation of their manhood, passes all comprehension. The Catholic recognizes the Church as established by Christ, who gave His Apostles power and made it their duty to teach. In obeying the Apostles and their successors, in receiving the faith, the worship, the ministry transmitted from them and by them, he preserves his dignity and his manhood; he bows to an authority instituted by God. But the Reformation in Germany swept all away. What was set up had no antecedent, no transmitted power or authority. It was the work of men usurping a divine function, without the shadow of a

pretence of divine commission. To bow to it is from a mere human point of view the deepest degradation to which man can sink.

Luther had erected himself into something more than Church, or Popes, or Councils. But he soon found that his followers were inclined to use the same liberty that he had assumed. His authority was defied on all sides. New teachers and new creeds appeared in all parts of Germany. His own principles, theories, and arguments were employed against him, and in religious matters chaos prevailed. In vain he endeavored to fall back on Catholic doctrines and the supernatural, and call on them, as he did on the Anabaptists, to prove their doctrine by miracles,[1] forgetting that he had no miracles to prove his own mission.

Luther had been able to destroy, but he was utterly unable to reconstruct. God, who is essentially the Spirit of Order, could never have sent any man as His minister merely to abolish, and then leave men without a guide as to the truths He wished them to know, the worship they were to render to Him.

Luther could not draw up a creed or institute a worship. Appealed to from all sides, he could only advise the civil powers to frame new religions for themselves. Some retained more of the Mass, others less; some retained what others rejected. If he did not, from the outset, avow the principle that the civil government had supreme jurisdiction over the faith of its subjects, and the worship to be rendered to Almighty God, he certainly, in the result, did so practically.

When, therefore, the meeting of the Diet at Augsburg made it necessary for the Protestant party to state distinctly its faith, Luther sinks to a secondary place. Unstable as water, how could he lay down a formula of faith when he was constantly denying one day what he had professed the day before? He declared the Church infallible (De 1 Præcept., and in reply to Priorato), and that it is fallible (In Postil. Dom., 1 post Epiph.); that we must submit to the Councils (In Disput. Lips., art. 16, contra Zuinglium); and that we must not (Contra Regem Angliæ, chap. 15); he maintains that the civil government has power over the ministers of religion (Ad. Christ. Nobiles Germaniæ), and denies it (Lib de Bello adv. Turc). He admitted that there was a hell (Serm. Conven. de Condemnatione et Inferno), and denied its existence (In cap. 2, Jonæ, in cap. 5, Gen.). He taught that the sacraments conferred grace (De præp. ad mort., Epistola contra Regem Angliæ), and he taught the very contrary (In Adsert., art. 1, Concio. de pœnitentia; De Captivitate Babyl.). He taught that there were seven Sacraments

[1] "Jussi tandem, ut miraculis probarent suam doctrinam, qua ultra et contra scripturas gloriarentur. Illi recusabant miracula, minati tamen sunt, fore ut credere tandem eis cogerer." Letter to Spalatinus, Apl. 12, 1522, De Wette, ii., p. 179.

(De Potestate Papæ, tom. ii. (Wittenb., 1551), tom. vii., p. 321); then reduces them to two (De Adoratione Sacram., vii., p. 373); increases them to three (Confess., art. 12, etc.), and even five (Serm. do Novo Testamento). He maintained each of the Sacraments and denied five of them. In baptism, he both admitted and denied that grace was conferred (De Captiv. Babylon.); that original sin is effaced (In cap. vi., Gen.); and that it is not (In Psal. li., etc.); he maintained that there was a purgatory, and that we should pray for the dead (Disput. Lips., cap. de Purgato.), and denied it (De Abroganda Missa. Priv.).

It was impossible for any one so uncertain and self-willed, so devoid of any solid foundation, to build up a system, or to prepare a creed that he would himself adhere to for twenty-four hours.

His moral character, too, had waned. He had declared repeatedly, and in the grossest terms, that man could not live without woman; he had encouraged monks, priests, and nuns to marry; his conduct at Worms had been so loose as to excite censure; and when Spalatinus urged him to marry, he replied that he had had four wives, and that they had married three away from him, and that he held the fourth only with the left hand; and when he finally married it was a tardy act of attempted reparation.[1]

All this, with his foul language, which exhausted the vocabulary of coarseness, brutality, and indecency, and which showed habitual use of words that could become familiar only to men who associated with the most degraded of creatures, made him especially unfitted to be trusted with the delicate task of framing such a profession of faith as could be presented and maintained.

His power and influence had culminated. They were potent only for destruction, and he had carried destruction to its limit.

The Augsburg Confession, which is to this day the symbol of the Lutherans, and printed in the beginning of their prayer-books, is not the work of Martin Luther. It was drawn up by Melanchthon, who corresponded with Luther, then at Coburg, but did not adhere to his views. Melanchthon was really desirous of ending the schism and returning to unity; he was endeavoring to act honestly. Luther desired neither to restore the unity of the Church nor to act honestly. On the 28th of August, 1530, he wrote to Me-

[1] His "Esto peccator et pecca fortiter," addressed to Melanchthon, in 1521, must, with his avowal of his own temptations and carnal desires, his denial of the possibility of even temporary continency, be regarded as intended especially to refer to sins of the flesh. He declared that he could find nothing in Scripture in condemnation of polygamy (De Wette, ii., p. 459), and, as is well known, allowed the Landgrave of Hesse to have two wives. Luther renewed, as far as he could, the old Indo-Germanic worship of lust, of which the *lingams* in India stand as monuments to this day.

lanchthon condemning him for not putting forward doctrines they did not believe, in order to gain time and delude their enemies; "For if," says he, "we avoid having force used against us, and gain peace, we shall easily amend our stratagems (*dolos*, and in many editions it is *mendacia*, lies) and lapses."

In this Confession the Lutherans denied that they wished to abolish Mass or Confession, and though editions vary, it so reads to this day in the Lutheran prayer-books. In regard to the Holy Eucharist, they used words evidently intended to deceive. "De cœna Domini docent quod corpus et sanguis Christi vere adsint et distribuantur vescentibus in cœna Domini et improbant secus docentes." "As to the Lord's Supper, they teach that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to those who eat at the Lord's Supper, and they condemn those who teach otherwise." (Confessio Invariata.) Luther's horrid denial of Free Will was covered up also in ambiguous phrases. The originals presented to Charles V., in Latin and German, were not published, but it is asserted that they were even stronger on this point.[1]

Luther's influence at Augsburg prevented the return of Germany to the faith, and led to the hypocritical Confession, intended not to confess, but to conceal the real belief of those who made it.

This Confession, however, became a standard, and in the Protestant states of Germany each prince set to work to frame a religious system to keep his people from lapsing into utter heathenism. When the Scandinavian kings also revolted from the Church, they too, on the basis of Luther, modelled churches with creed, orders of ministry and service to suit themselves.

While the civil power was thus endeavoring to build up what he had levelled, and make a religion as part of the state police, Luther lived in comparative retirement with the nun Catharine Bora, whom he had married in 1525, and the family that grew up around them, studying and working, relaxing to enjoy music or potations with his friends, pouring out the strange medley of table talk which his admirers noted down and preserved for the amazement of future ages.

Of that marriage he wrote with his usual inconsistency, ascribing it alike to the devil and to God.

In them and in his letters he often deplores the decline of virtue and morality, of piety and charity among the people, and declares that men were better when under the old system.

---

[1] Luther, in his letter "An die Christen zu Strassburg," December 15th, 1524, tells them that he tried to give up the faith in the Real Presence to spite the Papists; and elsewhere relates how the devil finally convinced him that the Catholic doctrine was wrong. What a fearful way of dealing with the holiest things!

Yet he resolutely resisted all efforts to recall him to his early faith and give his aid to a cause in which he was no longer a leader. His virulence of language increased, if possible, and his words almost on his deathbed make one shudder. Well might the Reformed Church of Zurich write: "It is clearer than the sun, and cannot be denied, that no mortal ever wrote more foully, more uncivilly, or more indecently than Luther, and this beyond all limits of Christian modesty and sobriety."

Pretended translations of his *Tischreden*, or Table Talk, have been given, but if Luther was a man of God, full of the Spirit of the Gospel, why not give the work in full? We can brand as hypocrites those who speak of Luther as pure and good, and defy them to print a translation of the *Tischreden* without suppression and without toning down his language. They dare not show Luther to the deluded as he really is.

Luther's most potent work, which exercised an influence over the language of all Germany, and which has continued in use to the present time among Protestants in Germany, is his translation of the Bible, begun in the castle of Wartburg and completed in 1522. His great object was to make the version thoroughly German, and to make the sacred authors read as though they had written in German. "Great God," he wrote, "what a labor, to employ force to make the Hebrew poets express themselves in German!" To attain this, he often sacrificed accuracy, even where his strong prepossessions did not induce him to mistranslate on purpose. His version was clear, forcible, and at once became popular. He boasted that it was better as a translation than the Vulgate or Septuagint. His work made the Saxon dialect the classic language of Germany, and in comparison with his natural style, the earlier German translations by Catholics, though faithful to a nicety, seem harsh and obscure. It cannot be wondered at that Luther's Bible attained a wide popularity, and exercised a decided influence in the formation of the German language.

To the Reformers this Bible became everything. Martin Luther's main dogma was that nothing could be required to be believed that is not explicitly laid down in the Bible. The dogma, if accepted, must be rejected, for it is not itself explicitly laid down anywhere in the Bible. But Protestantism has never regarded this slight inconsistency, and where the Catholic doctrine is explicitly stated, as in the Real Presence, the Apostolic power of forgiving sins, Baptismal Regeneration, the Supremacy of St. Peter, the judicious insertion of a negative will always give the Protestant doctrine.

It is, however, amazing that Luther, who spent ten years translating the Bible, and made it the study of his life, should enunciate

such a dogma when he really had little reverence for the Bible. As he rejected the authority of the teaching Church, he had no guide but his own whim. He began by rejecting the deutero-canonical books entirely, although they had always been received by the Oriental churches, and especially by those who occupied the Holy Land, and who, consequently, had preserved the books continuously. But even for the books that he chose to retain, he showed little or no respect. Of the Pentateuch he says: "We have no wish either to see or hear Moses." Of Ecclesiastes: "This book should be more complete; it is mutilated; it is like a horseman riding without boots or spurs." He wished that Esther did not exist. The New Testament fared no better: "The first three (Gospels) speak of the works of our Lord rather than of his oral teachings; that of St. John is the only sympathetic, the only true Gospel, and should be undoubtedly preferred to the others. In like manner the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Paul are superior to the first three Gospels." The Epistle to the Hebrews did not suit him. "It need not surprise one to find here," he says, "bits of wood, hay, and straw." The Epistle of St. James, which so decidedly declares works with faith to be necessary, Luther denounced as "an epistle of straw." "There are many things objectionable in this book," he says of the Apocalypse; "to my mind it bears upon it no marks of an apostolic or prophetic character. . . . . Every one may form his own judgment of this book; as for myself, I feel an aversion to it, and to me this is sufficient reason for rejecting it."

Thus did he pave the way for the Rationalists, who, in Germany, scarcely surpass him.

His pride was intense. He conceived himself directly illuminated by the Holy Ghost, and second only to the Godhead. For all others he had nothing but contempt and scorn. To him all must bow, and in that Satanic pride he felt the deepest loathing even of his followers, of whom he wrote: "Stercora nostra adorabunt et pro balsamo habebunt."

Such is Luther, but not such will he be presented in the commemorations about to take place. There his doubts, vacillations, and inconsistencies will be pardoned; his treatment of the Scriptures will be extolled; his low moral tone admired; his hatred of everything Catholic applauded; yet, really, the nineteenth century, in its dotage, ought not to insult human reason by holding up such a man as one raised up by God, as one who did any real service to religion or morality, or by honoring as the champion of human freedom one who persistently denied free will in man, or man's responsibility for his acts.

WHAT HAS IRELAND GAINED BY AGITATION?

AFTER five continuous years of excited agitation, it is fair to ask: Has Ireland gained? Judging from her apparent condition alone, one might say decidedly: She has not gained; she has lost. The laws in force there at this moment are more oppressive, more exasperating, more like the rigid bands of a "conquered province," and less like the order of an enfranchised nation, than they have been since the abrogation of all law but the sword eighty-five years ago.

But the actual present condition of Ireland is not the criterion. It shows violence and arbitrary force-rule on the part of the government. And the governmental violence is the measure of the popular resistance. Judgment must be formed from the recent past and the signs of the immediate future.

Two years ago the national leader of Ireland, and hundreds of the principal men in the country, were cast into prison, and kept there, untried, and subjected to daily shameful indignities, for many months. The English press proclaimed that this was "the end of Parnell's power." The Land League was condemned as an illegal and criminal organization. The landlords announced that the farmers had been "terrorized by the League," and were now willing to pay their rents.

Delusions both. Mr. Parnell is more powerful than ever. There is a greater League in existence to-day; and the landlords are begging a loan from the Imperial treasury.

The *London Times*, voicing the privileged classes of England, is at present calling for "extraordinary measures for Ireland," which, it says, must be "resolutely carried out." An "extraordinary measure," for instance, would be the reimprisonment of Mr. Parnell and the principal men who were with him in jail eighteen months ago. Will this be done? How would such a movement strike Ireland at this stage? How would it strike the outer world?

It may safely be said that this step will not, dare not be taken. The only other "extraordinary measure" that can keep the Irish from continuing to win is to disfranchise the entire nation—to go behind even the Catholic disfranchisement repealed in 1829, for the Protestants are now as troublesome as the Papists, as illustrated by the Monaghan and Sligo elections. The Orange farmers are voting the Nationalist ticket.

Were Ireland in remote India, such a policy of disfranchisement might pass unseen. But in the very midst of civilization, within

sight of the doorways of Europe, this course is not likely to be attempted; and if it were, the loss would continue on the side of the aggressor.

On the 21st of August, the English House of Peers, by a vote of 52 to 32, rejected a Registration Bill for Ireland, which would have given power to the people to elect Nationalist representatives from almost every county and borough in Ireland. The twenty English peers who formed the majority, unable to disfranchise, were resolved not to enfranchise; but on which side lies the gain? On the next day, August 22d, the Prime Minister stated in the House of Commons that he regretted the action of the Lords; and also that he would "introduce a larger measure on the subject at the next session of Parliament."

But the material gain to Ireland is not the greater gain, which is abstract, intellectual, spiritual.

The session of Parliament just concluded has been notable for practical legislation for Ireland; by the Fisheries Act a million and a quarter dollars have been voted to develop coast fisheries; by the Tramways Act ten million dollars have been voted to build tramways through districts where railroads are not, thus opening up immense and populous tracts by cheap communication with the large markets; by the same bill a quarter of a million dollars have been voted to migrate the people from poor and crowded districts to rich and fertile land, and to enable them to purchase holdings there; and by this bill, also, another quarter of a million dollars have been voted to send the impoverished people to foreign countries; by the Laborers Bill the dwellings of the poorest element of the population will be vastly improved.

But these money-grants are not the measure of Irish gain during the agitation. The real gain is an Irish growth, not an English grant. Two years ago the Irish agitation was aimed only at the lowering of rents and "the abolition of landlordism." To-day the first clause in the programme is National Self-Government.

Glance back over the events of two years. The Land League had done its work completely; it had aroused and organized the people, exposed the general and appalling poverty, the immorality of such a class as absentee landlords and such a system as rack rents. It also gave the people a proof of their own power when united, and illustrated the folly of disunion. When there was danger of the people depending too long on their new machinery, they were saved from the error by English statesmanship, that "proclaimed" the Land League, broke up its meetings, and imprisoned hundreds of its leaders.

This was a gain for Ireland that has hastened developments by years. England played a card for Ireland better than any in the

Irish hand. Not only was the Land League prevented from misdirecting the national aim to a secondary target, but the earnestness and patriotism of the people were blown into white heat by the arbitrary arrest of the leaders and the legalized lawlessness of the new Crimes Act.

But if Ireland has gained so much, why is she not doing as well as could be done? 1st. Because a large part of her actual gain has come from her enemy's blunders; and, 2d. Because all other gain is only possible and prospective, and may yet be lost by her own blunders.

There is, it must be admitted, a strange vagueness, not of purpose but practice, in the Irish National League.

The Land League was direct, single-minded; and in two years its work was done and well done. But the new league, designed to agitate for Self-Government, has only filled its cylinders with Land League steam. It strikes an intermittent and uncertain stroke. It is clear enough on paper; but the people who compose it are not pulling on one rope; when questioned, they do not respond with the same answer; they are not of one mind.

Nothing could be clearer than the order of the five propositions underlying the new National League. They are:

1st. National Self-Government.

2d. Land Law Reform.

3d. Local Self-Government.

4th. Extension of the Parliamentary and Municipal Franchises.

5th. The development and encouragement of the Labor and Industrial Interests of Ireland.

To interfere with the order of these propositions may be as dangerous as to desert them altogether; and yet they have not been upheld, as they stand, by the League of which they are the first principles.

The direct movement for Self-Government for Ireland has not yet been begun, either in Ireland or America, except by the secret revolutionary societies. The object of these is total separation from England, and the establishment of a republic. That is not the object of the Irish National League.

The first article of the National League is: "The restitution to the Irish people of the right to manage their own affairs in a Parliament elected by the people of Ireland." There has not been, since the League was formed, a public meeting held in Ireland or America at which this object was put forward as the purpose of the agitation. This is an important and extraordinary fact.

It is true, Mr. Parnell at the recent League meeting in Dublin announced that a bill for "Local Self-Government" would be introduced in the next session of Parliament, thus placing the third

article of the programme before the first. But Mr. Parnell does not so place them. This bill will not come from the Irish representatives. It will be an English offer, not an Irish ultimatum—a sop to take the place of a satisfaction.

Should such a bill be offered, it will be accepted, of course; it is decreasing the length of the enemy's sword by even an inch, and increasing the Irish blade.

"Local Self-Government" means, more or less, the abolition of the English official network that now ties the hands of the Irish people for the greatest and the least movement. It means the abolition of the principle of nomination by the government of grand juries, sheriffs, magistrates, and membership of the following boards: The Local Government Board; the Board of Works; the General Valuation and Boundary Survey; the Board of National Education; the Prison and Reformatory Boards, and the Fishery Board. It means the transfer of all these to county boards, elected by the people, which shall take charge of all union workhouses, asylums, hospitals, prisons, reformatory schools, and other institutions supported by local rates.

The bill offered by the English ministry next session will probably not be so sweeping in its reform; but a change that shall pass any of this local machinery into the hands of the people is a change to be accepted.

"Local self-government" will be a large assistance toward attaining national self-government. They are all bound up together —registration of laborers, land reform, and industrial development. But the principle of nationality must be kept in advance. Whatever contracts are to be made between England and Ireland—and it is evident that the period of contract-making has come—can only be made with safety between the Parliaments of the two countries, and not between the English government on one side, and the individual Irish counties, towns, corporations, or farmers, on the other.

The recent grant of two-and-a-half million dollars to migrate poor families from crowded to uncrowded districts in Ireland, was an advantage; but as soon as a corporation was formed in Ireland to collect money from the people, to coöperate with the English government in this movement, the advantage was lost, and the principle misunderstood. England may well grant "favors," if she can induce the Irish farmers, or the clergy, or any distinct class in return, to bind themselves directly to the Imperial treasury, by mortgage or gratitude.

Irish nationality is unsafe so long as England is in a position to treat directly with any class of the people, and not with their national representative government. No country would be safe, in which

the states, towns, or individuals were allowed to mortgage their property and allegiance to a foreign government. Why, then, is the self-government principle held in abeyance? Why is not the machinery of the National League set working without delay, for its main object?

There are three influences which impede the progress of the new agitation. One is natural, one conservative, and one radical.

First. The subsidence of one great agitation compels a passive or fallow season, a period of rest, before another can be entered upon. Agitation is a wave-motion on the sea of reform. The Land League harvest had used up much vitality. The silence and inaction of a winter were necessary for recuperation.

Second. In every country, there is a conservative class, influential, educated, timid of change, willing to go on as at present, or to seek for slow reform in the direction of the present line. This class, composed of various elements, is strong in Ireland. It rather fears the possible action of an independent Irish Parliament. On one side is a fear that Home Rule would be "Rome Rule," while in another is a dread that secret societies and other uncertain elements might dominate the government. Added to these is the purely British Catholic belief, which more or less affects Ireland, that if the Irish members left the British Parliament, the English Catholic party would be wholly unrepresented there, except by Protestants or atheists, and the "reconversion of England" would therefore be indefinitely postponed.

Third. The republicans or revolutionists have secretly disliked Home Rule, which they have passionately and unreasonably called a "compromise with England." The Irish radicals are a faithful and hopeful class, willing to wait for the day of "England's difficulty," with a knife ready to cut the bond entirely. They fear that a temporizing policy may permanently lessen the patriotism of the people. However they may outwardly support the "open organizations," as they call them, they have firmly believed that the heroic principle of abiding, even through pain, for the supreme opportunity of entire independence, was the best course for Ireland.

None of these three influences actually opposes Home Rule, but all three restrain it. But outside these are the great common interests and common-sense of the nation, which are gradually and surely permeating the whole.

It is easily seen that the period of stagnation is about over. The country is rousing itself to a new effort, and the coming agitation will certainly be deeper and wider than the last. Next year will see a real national movement in Ireland. The conservative elements are moving to the popular rhythm. The Orangemen

of the North have caught the inspiration; the recent attacks by some of their body on Nationalist meetings being merely the last resource of the landlord party. The bishops and priests have firmer confidence in the political leaders than they had one or two years ago. And the most radical of the revolutionists are beginning to perceive that a man who is gagged and ironed, hand and foot, does not "compromise" with his oppressor by allowing him to remove the gag, and liberate one arm.

Radical or revolutionary spirit is usually only the result of inexperience in moral reform. To the natural eye the force of arms is the only means to overthrow injustice. The facility of violence is the measure of national as of individual development.

But where the word precedes the deed, reforms are complete and permanent. Premature action, however heroic, is as often regarded as a warning as an example. Irish revolutions cannot compare in beneficial results with Irish agitations; and the country is yet young in this higher order of reform.

Ten, or even five years ago, the "nationalist" who should advise Irishmen to take an interest in local elections, say for poor-law guardians, would be considered almost "a traitor." To-day, the people are a unit for securing even limited local government as a means to an end; and the constitutional exercise in this direction is affecting the political methods even of the revolutionists.

Besides the gain of this improved method of national action, there has been an elevation of tone, a greater calmness of expression in the Irish movement. This is due, almost wholly, to the Catholic hierarchy and clergy. Their critical attitude has steadied the movements of the people, discounted passion, compelled a conscientious consideration of the interests at stake—in a word, has raised the Irish national movement from social materialism, and made it Christian and legitimate.

It is a fair hope that the secret society will disappear from Ireland with the foreign rule that created it; and that the passionate earnestness which led many Irishmen to the proscribed organizations, will, in a self-governed Ireland, hold the same men faithful to the highest spiritual obligation. England is now holding up the Irish radical as a terror to the Catholic Church, just as, a few years ago, she held up the priest as a bugaboo to the Protestants and Orangemen.

There are two most remarkable features in the present Irish movement,—namely, patient, moral agitation, by a warlike and passionate people, and the unique influence of exiled millions on the affairs of the home country. These are illustrations of national and international progress. Both are based on moral force; but moral force has always a threat in reserve.

The Irish movement is not slow; it is rapid enough. The glacier is moving. Henceforth, its most precious element will be the guiding one. The main body of the nation has progressed with marvellous judgment and temperance, considering its opportunities and exasperations. The highest proof of intelligence is to win with a minority; and so far Ireland has carried every position on which she bent the national will. During the last five years she has taught the world a splendid lesson in moral agitation for reform.

THE ORIGIN OF CIVIL AUTHORITY.

[PART SECOND.—CONCLUSION.]

European Civilization, by Rev. J. Balmes. Baltimore, 1874.

Die Grundsätze der Sittlichkeit und des Rechtes, beleuchtet von Th. Meyer, S. J., Freiburg, Herder. 1868.

IF Catholic philosophers trace back authority to God as to its true source, they neither enter upon a new attempt, nor teach us a truth foreign from mankind. With the idea of governments endowed with a superhuman character even the heathen world was conversant. All the states of antiquity, the empires of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Assyrians, the early kingdoms of the Greeks, and the Romans were governed by rulers whose authority was thought to have descended from the Deity; nay, no less common was this view of power among the nations than the belief in a Supreme Being. Nor do we meet here with mere heathen superstition. The universality of that conviction must needs rest on some truth, though darkened and distorted. Moreover, the ancient commonwealths were flourishing as long as the sacredness of law and authority was respected; but no sooner were governments looked on as quite earthly institutions than they began to give way to the violence of human passions. History proves this fact with regard to all states. Now, would it not be a very strange phenomenon, if human society should prosper when based on mere falsehood, and decline when its fundamental principles are sifted from error? Hence it is easily understood that the conviction concerning the divine origin of civil power, coeval with mankind, is older than Christianity, and not based on revelation alone. It

is also a natural truth striking with evidence human reason, and shining with full lustre on all that do not shut their eyes to the light.

Authority, indeed, manifests its true origin whenever its functions and characteristic properties are attentively reflected on. Thus its divine descent is at once clear and set beyond all doubt. This way we are now to follow in developing and demonstrating the Christian theory of civil power, after having, in a previous article, demonstrated the absurdity of the systems which derive government from man himself.

Authority, destined to govern civil society, must first be a power strong enough to overcome all egotistic resistance of the individuals, to withstand all onsets of lower passions, to defy all plots of the unruly. It must be steady and immovable in spite of all motions of our free will, aroused by the various propensities of human nature, and stand like a rock amidst all the waves tossed to and fro in the course of ages. Indestructible and unconquerable in itself, it must give firmness, permanence and unity to the state, notwithstanding our natural changefulness.

Authority must, secondly, be above each individual man and all mankind in general. For he who is invested with governmental power binds our wills and lays on them the necessity to follow a certain rule, in order thus to reduce us to unity and harmony in our actions. But what restricts our will is not only distinct from, but also superior to us. Distinct from us it must be, because, if left to ourselves and put under no restraint from outside, we are not bound, but enjoy our full freedom. Our own resolutions are no tie for us, since we may at any moment change them with as much right as we have formed them. Superior to us the power that binds us must be, because, if that which is to subject us to a certain order is not of a higher rank, we may resist it and undo its work. Neither can one man, therefore, of his own authority, bind another, since, so far as nature is concerned, we are all equal and free, nor can all mankind restrain our will, since the power of laying such a necessity on us cannot be constituted by adding the powerlessness of individuals.

Hence, it follows that, thirdly, authority lies originally in the Author of nature. For, as man is naturally free and enabled to pursue whatever conduces to his happiness, nobody can rightfully limit the sphere of our action and our liberty but He who has shaped human nature. Since He, by the title of authorship, holds exclusive dominion over us and is the absolute master of all our faculties, no other power may take from us what He has given us or modify what he constituted in us. Our very nature is, therefore, for us a charter of freedom, of exemption from any other rule than His.

The manner being considered in which our free wills can be bound, authority, fourthly, implies command over our ultimate end and destiny. What is it to bind our wills? It is not to annul our intrinsic freedom or power of choice, for this is innate to rational nature. But how is it possible to lay a necessity on man, and yet let him remain intrinsically free, restrict his freedom, and yet not hinder his self-determination? This question is, indeed, not the easiest in moral philosophy. To solve it, we must bear in mind the nature of free will. Man's will is the tendency to happiness, and his freedom is the capacity to embrace or not to embrace what is conducive, but not necessary, to happiness. Such capacity rests on no intricate principle. He who is able to will an end can also will the means to it, and he who can aspire to the fulness of all good, can pursue also any particular good. But, on the other hand, the will cannot be intrinsically necessitated to things which are not either its ultimate and adequate end aimed at by its very nature, or means for the actual attainment of this end evidently necessary. Hence, we are in possession of our entire freedom when something is proposed to us which, though all good in itself and necessary, still does not at present confer on us full happiness, or which, though it threatens us with some evil in one respect, promises us in another a high gratification. We, on this account, remain free with regard to objects, which, however odious and repugnant to our lower appetites, are, nevertheless, known to be the source of, or necessary means to, our future happiness; or which, however agreeing with our senses, are inconsistent with the perfection of our spiritual nature. In such instances, however, notwithstanding our freedom, a restraint is laid on our will. For if it chooses a pleasure opposed to the future embrace of the supreme good, or if it recoils from the difficulties to be overcome in the attainment of the same, it forfeits its true happiness. It is, then, put in the alternative, either now to admit what is hard or disagreeable, or to renounce for later consummate felicity; it has the choice between a present evil connected with future beatitude and a present gratification followed by the greatest future loss. Is the will, in this juncture, not really under a kind of necessity? For can it choose that by which it foregoes future happiness without acting in contravention to its own nature, or reject that which is necessary for the possession of the supreme good without giving up its most necessary object? Not improperly is, therefore, the alternative spoken of termed moral necessity or obligation, because it presses, but does not overwhelm, confines, but does not force, our will. Thus we see necessity rendered consistent with freedom in all that is necessarily connected with the *future* attainment of our last end and supreme good. But it is likewise evident that no other man-

ner of reconciling two things so opposite can be conceived, because in any other way either no real necessity at all, or a compelling necessity excluding freedom, will be imposed on us.

Authority, then, to produce unity and harmony in society, must imply the power of connecting the performance or forbearance of certain actions in the social order with the attainment of happiness; since it must inseparably and permanently tie us together, not being able to act with binding necessity on our free will. It must, consequently, have command over our ultimate end and destiny. For who can lay down the conditions or determine the means necessary for the possession of our supreme good, but he who marks out the object to which we naturally tend, and grants or denies us its embrace.

Can we now doubt whence authority must flow? The will of God alone is by its infinite holiness unchangeable in maintaining the right order, and by its infinite power strong enough to restrain all motions of human passions. Any created will is of itself subject to instability. God alone is essentially the mover unmoved also in the moral order. He is the power superior to each individual and to all mankind. He is the maker of human nature. He has produced man and constituted the human essence after His own image. He has created every one's rational soul and implanted in it free will. He, therefore, is the author as well as the Supreme Lord of our freedom; He may, according to His wisdom and holiness, regulate it by His law; but besides Him, there is in no being the right interest to limit or restrain it by command. Any attempt of that kind on the part of our fellow-creatures would be a wrong, both against our Creator and against ourselves. It is likewise God alone that can put a necessary connection between certain actions and our ultimate destiny. For as He appoints our last end, so it belongs to Him to prescribe the way in which we may reach it; and as He is the supreme good in which we find eternal rest, so He determines under what conditions we may be happy in His embrace.

For many reasons, then, is authority competent to God alone. Its stability, its superiority, its sway over nature, its command over our end and destiny give it such a character as shows it to be a part of divine sovereignty. If, therefore, it is found with the leaders also of social bodies, it has not grown from a human ground, but must have come down from above as an emanation of divine power, and the persons clothed with it are to be obeyed, not as men, but as ministers of God. And this is quite consistent with the other relations in which the universe stands to its Creator. In this way the Deity is as the principle of all existence in the physical, and the foundation of all essences in the metaphysical, so the source also

of all unity and order in the moral and social sphere; as the cause of the beauty and harmony of the material world, so the support of all strength and concord in human society. Again, as by their dependence on God all beings receive their highest perfection from the infinite ocean of all good, and men in particular partake of the light of the supreme intellect and the nobleness of the supreme will; so when all authority springs from the divine sovereignty, society is built on a firm and unshaken basis, and in every regard wonderfully raised and perfected. From its rulers is derived an issue of divine power as the animating form of the whole body politic; its members are endowed with such eminent freedom and dignity as to owe subjection to nobody but to God and to those on whom His majesty is reflected.

But how shall we further explain that God has in reality intrusted His authority to men, in order to govern society? Is there some way in which we may unmistakably know His will in this regard? Has He written a charter to which governments may appeal as to the fountain of their rights?

Yes, He has done so in the very creation of human nature. Society, first domestic and then civil, is, as we have shown, a consequence of our inborn tendencies, a natural necessity. God Himself has, therefore, instituted society when He created man. Of course we do not say that the foundation of each individual state is directly the work of the Creator. Nature does not necessitate us to live in a certain republic or monarchy, in a state on this or that side of the ocean, just as it does not bind a man to marry such a particular person. As to all this, society depends on peculiar circumstances and, to a great extent, on our free will. Yet nature irresistibly inclines us to social life in some state no matter how constituted, to civil society in general, abstract from particular modes. Thus far no freedom is given us. But if God in the act of creation intended society to exist, He wills all its constituents also. This we infer with full certainty. Now, authority is an essential element of society, its form and life-giving principle. The Creator Himself has, consequently, established authority in the state as well as in the family, such authority as is sufficient to unite the wills of men by laying them under strict obligation, and is hence a participation of His divine power. Nature itself is thus the credential letter by which governments are appointed to rule in place of God.

If we now endeavor to enter more deeply into the mind of the Creator, disclosed in some way by nature, we shall win a still clearer idea of authority and a fuller knowledge of its character; for science is always greatly perfected, when, after having risen

from the effect to the cause by the analytical way, we descend again from the cause to the effect by the synthetical way.

God has created this universe and all that is in it for His outward glory, to be brought about by every creature in accordance with its natural powers; by the irrational beings through manifesting His perfections, by the rational through paying Him the tribute of love, praise, and adoration. This is, with absolute necessity, required by His infinite wisdom and sanctity. By the former He cannot but pursue perfect order in all His works, and hence always subjects the inferior to the superior; by the latter he must entirely subordinate all rational wills to Himself as to the supreme good. For this end man also, the chief of this visible world, is necessarily bound. Certain actions, therefore, which by their very nature promote His glory, and without which the rational creature would not be at all rightly subjected to Him, God not only considers as intrinsically good, but also commands as absolutely necessary. Other actions, on the contrary, which imply opposition to Him, He cannot but detest as evil and forbid under heavy penalties. He, moreover, provides us also with all that renders possible and facilitates our free tendency to Him; for He who wills the end wills, no doubt, the means also necessary for it. This is why the irrational creature is subservient to us, thus conducing through man to the divine glory. It is for the same reason that God intends the existence and preservation of the social order; for our nature, as created by Him, is in need of domestic and civil society as sources of many means without which we could not exist and act in keeping with our dignity and final destination. The whole universe lies thus before God as the object both of His intellect and of His will, put in marvellous harmony and fully fitted to procure His glory; all its constituent parts perfect in themselves, but one subordinate to the other, the lower to the higher, the irrational beings to men; men again united and associated to aid one another in the pursuit of objects not attainable through single efforts; and all of them, richly furnished as they are in this manner with the necessaries of subsistence and proper activity, destined and enabled to tend to the Divinity as their last end and object of complete happiness.

This wonderful order which the Divine mind conceives, and the divine will purposes in the rational creation, the queen of the irrational, is the eternal law; for God draws it up, not in time but in eternity, from the relations implied proximately in the essences of all things, and ultimately in His own infinite essence; and is determined upon it, not with freedom, but of necessity in consequence of His bounty and holiness. Yet though eternal, this law is not concealed within His own mind, but expressed in the rational

creation, where it is to be obeyed. It is not difficult to find its traces indelibly imprinted on our nature. The human is a participation of the Divine reason, and hence it also perceives the necessary relations of the right order in the universe, if not like the Divine intellect with full knowledge from the source of all being itself, at least imperfectly by abstraction and inference from the nature of the created things brought to our cognizance. Indeed, as our cognition proceeds by abstraction, by forming universal notions from the objects offered through the senses to the understanding, and by forming universal judgments from our universal notions, we, at first, know the right order only in the light of general principles, but subsequently deduce from them particular conclusions. Just for the universality of our supreme principles, the knowledge which we thus gather by reasoning puts order in our whole activity; not only in our private life and our worship of the Deity, but also in our social relations. We see at once that we must live in civil and domestic society, because, if not associated, we are unfit for the end to which our nature aspires, and are full well aware that society cannot fulfil its task without a government universally obeyed. And these principles, with their immediate deductions, are not objective truths alone, but also a law, not one that we have made ourselves, but one that we have discovered in the objective order of things; for it flashes on us as a necessity outside of us, absolutely to be complied with and based on an unchangeable, everlasting foundation. Of what kind that law is we may easily find out. As to the way in which it is made known to us, it is natural, because rational nature itself enables us to perceive it and forces it on us even against our will; but as to its ultimate author it is divine; because the unchanging foundation of its necessity cannot lie but in the Divinity. It is the participation of God's eternal law by our own nature, the reflection of the same in rational creation by the fact that ours is a participation of divine reason.[1]

How much are our views enlarged by this consideration? We see society, and in it authority, with all its characteristic properties established by the supreme law, conceived by the Divine mind, and expressed in nature. But we become cognizant also of the position which the family and the state have in the well-concerted system of the universe. Society, with authority as its centre, thus appears to us but as a division of the great plan which God follows in the government of all creation, as a subordinate sphere in the order set up by Him in the world. It unites men and reduces them to one whole, but it is not our last end, nor is it in its actions absolute and independent. God is the ultimate end of all rational

[1] S. Thom., S. Theol., I., II., qu. 93, art. 1 and 2.

beings, to be reached directly and to be embraced immediately by each individual with perfect knowledge and love. Society in general affords us only some means to attain this high destination; civil society in particular furnishes us for that same purpose only with temporal goods. It is not self-existent and independent. It is, on the contrary, founded by the Creator, and so dependent on Him, that without a principle of unity derived from Him it can neither act nor subsist. Since, moreover, the great universal scheme of the rational creation, conceived by the Divine mind, is the moral order, that is, the subjection of all created beings unto God as their last end and supreme good, society and authority are not emancipated from morality, but are under its sway, and strictly bound to keep within its limits.

These remarks on the eternal law may have seemed long and tiresome; but we could not dispense with them, because they will serve us as a basis of our further discussion. From the divine origin of civil power, as thus far proved, we have now to draw several conclusions respecting its activity; for who sees not that its force must be quite different as the source whence it flows is considered to be divine or human? The action of authority consists in harmoniously leading the members of society to the attainment of the object which they are to pursue with united efforts. Whatever is necessary to this effect, it is empowered and even bound to do; whatever is not to this purpose, lies beyond the sphere of its power. God Himself, when He drew up the eternal law, had no other view of authority, and appointed it for no other end.

We have already said that the chief function of civil power in fulfilling its task is the establishment of law and right. What strength and properties may they derive from their superhuman principles? Let us first speak of law. Its binding power must be divine. Were it not such, it could not lay our wills under moral necessity or obligation, and hence it would not be sufficient to energize and unite the members of the state to wholesome public action. This sacred character of law was known even to the heathens. Witness is borne to it, not only in their myths, but also in the writings of their philosophers. "We should understand," say Cicero, "that the commandments and prohibitions of the nations have not sufficient power to lead us on to virtuous actions, and to call us away from vicious ones. This power is not only far more ancient than the existence of states and peoples, but is coeval with God Himself, who beholds and governs both heaven and earth."[1]

[1] "Sed vero intelligi sic oportet et hæc et alia jussa ac vetita populorum vim non habere ad recte facta vocandi et a peccatis avocandi: quæ vis non modo senior est quam acta populorum et civitatum, sed æqualis illius coelum atque terras tuentis et regentis Dei." De Legibus, lib. ii., cp. 4.

Such a higher force law, indeed, has, if, as we have shown, it emanates from authority intrusted by God to man; then, in fact, we find in it a divine element; then we may speak of its majesty and all-commanding sway.

But if the formal constituent of law, its obligatory power, is divine, its contents must needs have certain qualities to be worthy of being informed, as it were, by that divine soul. Any human enactment must, on this account, first be conformable to the eternal and natural law. Many reasons require this. To the order established by the Divine wisdom and holiness, no doubt, the several parts must perfectly agree with one another, and cannot possibly be at variance. Yet, the universal order of rational creation, willed by God in consequence of His infinite holiness, coincides with the eternal law, and is but a subordinate portion of this authority appointed for the government of society. How, then, by the latter particular could laws contrary to the eternal and universal law be rightfully enacted? Nay, the law drawn up by the Divine mind from all eternity contains the fundamental constitution of the state, founds the same, defines its end, creates in it authority with a marked-out object and corresponding power. Now, where may a government validly issue decrees in contravention to the constitution of the society over which it is set?

Where may authority proclaim laws not conformable to the purpose for which it was established or repugnant to the object to be pursued by the social body? Hence all enactments of civil power must, in a special manner, agree with that part of the eternal law which bears upon society. Moreover, all proper and suitable order, in whatever sphere, and hence in society also, must agree with the nature of things, and be founded on their essential principles and relations. Statutes not based on that foundation will, of necessity, always result in disorder and destruction, since they are bound to effect discord and hostile opposition. But as the essential relations of the rational creation are expressed in the eternal law, so what agrees with them is known to us from the principles of reason, the constituent parts of the natural law. This, therefore, is the standard and the source of all rules to be given to man.

On this account St. Thomas says[1] that all human enactments are particular rules drawn from the dictates of reason as undemonstrable principles. Adding that the human law has force only inasmuch as it is derived from the natural, he explains in what way the one is deduced from the other. From the natural law, says he,[2] something may be derived, either as a conclusion or as

[1] S. Theol., i., ii., qu. 91, art. iii.
[2] S. Theol., i., ii., qu. 95, art. ii.

a determination; as a conclusion, if the universal laws of practical reason are taken up as premises to draw from them particular consequences; as a determination, if a yet indeterminate practical principle is fully determined and shaped into a well-defined rule of action. In the first manner we deduce from the natural precept that we should wrong nobody, that murder is unlawful; in the second we determine it to be an ordinance of nature that the evil-doer is to be punished by assigning for him a certain and definite punishment.

Besides agreeing with the Divine, the human law must be endowed with three other qualities, which, however, will be easily gathered from what we have said. It must, above all, not exceed the power of its author. With authority it is as with our natural faculties. These latter are, by their constitution, fitted for certain operations, but beyond that fitness they cannot produce the least effect. So authority works only within certain limits. It is, to speak of societies instituted by nature, conferred on rulers by the eternal law for determinate ends and purposes, and hence reaches just as far as they extend; yet beyond them it is a nonentity, because not granted by the Supreme Sovereign. Hence, where the lawgiver oversteps his power his law is not effective, but is devoid of any binding force. Next, law must be conducive to the welfare of the whole society; for it is for this alone that authority, which makes laws, is instituted by God. The common weal of any society consists in the straight tendency to and the actual attainment of its end. To promote this a government is necessary, and was established for the state by the eternal law, but there is no other reason which requires it or proves its legitimacy. Whenever, therefore, magistrates, in issuing ordinances, attend to the private interests either of themselves or of some particular individuals, and not to the well-being of the whole state, they act in contravention to the purpose for which God has intrusted them with power, and pass the bounds both of their authority and of the eternal order. When, on the contrary, all their actions aim at the real well-being of all, they but put into actuality that order which ought to exist through their ministration. The public welfare has, for this reason, always been considered as the supreme law, imposed on the lawgivers themselves.

Another necessary attribute of human law is its conformity with the moral order. Nothing is plainer than this truth, now so often denied by modern theorists. Is not the moral order identical with the eternal law? Must not, therefore, what agrees with the one be in harmony also with the other? But as to the law enacted by man, it is essential that it be conformable to eternal law proclaimed by God, since the latter both establishes authority from which commands issue and contains the principles from which all whole-

some regulations are derived. Besides, the binding power of law is divine. Can we now conceive that God, either by Himself or through His ministers clothed with His power, has set down immoral acts as means to His ends, or obliges us to do anything adverse to His wisdom and holiness, or to the right order willed by Him with absolute necessity? Nothing, therefore, that is not moral can bind us as a law or bear in itself any force of obligation. To say the contrary would be derogatory to God's perfection and the majesty of the law.

Lastly, law must be just and equitable. Men being all equal as to nature, and all embracing society with the same object in view, all must contribute also to the attainment of the common end, and all are entitled to a share in the fruits gained by the united efforts in proportion to their labors and sacrifices. Whence, where all alike enjoy the benefits of society, there, likewise, all have to bear the common burden alike; and where some derive greater profit from the social operation, there they ought to take upon themselves a greater part of the social charges and expenses, whilst to those who work and suffer more for the common well-being, richer rewards are justly granted. By no means can authority, in distributing by laws the public burdens and benefits, swerve from this equity, which is founded in the nature of men. For the order that results from the very essence of created beings is with necessity willed by God and comprised in His eternal law. Were, therefore, the decrees of human authority contrary to equity and justice, they would be repugnant to the eternal principles of right and order, and could not fall within the power that God has conferred on governments.

It is self-evident that all these qualities are absolutely necessary to the human law; so that, lacking any one of them, they have no binding power at all, because they do not originate in authority divinely established, but in violence, and do not effect order, but are themselves a startling disorder. Herein we have but strictly followed the doctrine of St. Thomas: "Laws," says he, "if they

[1] S. Theol., i., ii., qu. 96, art. iv.: "Respondeo dicendum quod leges positæ humanitus vel sunt justæ vel injustæ. Siquidem justæ sint, habent vim obligandi in foro conscientiæ a lege æterna, a qua derivantur, secundum illud (Proverbs viii., 15): 'Per me reges regnant, et legum conditores justa decernunt.' Dicuntur autem leges justæ et ex fine, quando scilicet ordinantur ad bonum commune; et ex auctore, quando scilicet lex lata non excedit potestatem ferentis; et ex forma, quando scilicet secundum æqualitatem proportionis imponuntur subditis onera in ordine ad bonum commune. . . Injustæ autem sunt leges dupliciter: uno modo per contrarietatem ad bonum humanum e contrario predictis; vel ex fine, sicut cum aliquis præsidens leges imponit onerosas subditis non pertinentes ad utilitatem communem, sed magis ad propriam cupiditatem vel gloriam; vel etiam ex auctore, sicut cum aliquis legem fert ultra sibi commissam potestatem; vel etiam ex forma, puta cum inequaliter onera multitudini dispensantur, etiamsi ordinentur ad bonum commune. Et hujusmodi magis sunt violentiæ quam

are just, have their force to bind us in conscience from the eternal law, from which they are derived, as the Proverbs (viii., 15) say: "By me kings reign and lawgivers decree just things." But laws are just from their end, if they aim at the common weal; from their author, if they do not exceed his power; from their form, if by them burdens are imposed on the subjects, in behalf of the common welfare, according to equity. Laws, on the contrary, are unjust for a twofold reason; first, because they are opposed to the well-being of man, either from their end, as is the case if a government lays onerous obligations on its subjects, not for the good of the common weal, but for the sake of self-interest or ambition; or from their author, as when any one makes a law without being invested with proper faculties; or from their form, as when the taxes are unequally divided among the multitude, although in other respects tending to the public good. Enactments of this kind are rather outrages than laws, since, as St. Augustine remarks (De Lib. Arbitr., lib. i., qs. 5): "An unjust law does not appear to be a law." Such laws, therefore, are not binding in conscience, unless, perhaps, for the avoiding of scandal and trouble, a motive which ought to induce man to give up his right, as we read in St. Matthew (v., 41): "And whosoever shall force thee to go one mile, go with him other two; and if any one will go to law with thee and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Laws may, secondly, be unjust on account of their opposition to God; of which kind are the ordinances of tyrants enforcing idolatry or anything else contrary to Divine law. With respect to such laws, it is not allowable, under any circumstances, to obey them; for, as it is said in the Acts of the Apostles (v., 29): "We must obey God rather than man."

St. Thomas, then, says in plain terms that human laws have binding power only if they are just; and by justice he understands their conformity with the dictates of reason, that is, the natural and eternal law (see S. Theol., i., ii., qu. 95, art. 2). But justice taken in this sense requires that laws be not repugnant either to the will of God, from whom their force ultimately comes, or to the well-being of man, on whom they are imposed, but that rather they fully agree with the right order by tending to our common welfare, by ema-

leges; quia, sicut S. Augustinus dicit (De Lib. Arbitr., lib. i., qs. 5), sed esse non videtur, quæ justa non fuerit. Unde tales leges non obligant in foro conscientiæ, nisi forte propter vitandum scandalum vel turbationem; propter quod homo etiam juri suo debet cedere secundum illud (Matth. v., 41): 'Qui angariaverit te mille passus, vade cum eo alia duo; et qui abstulerit tibi tunicam, da ei et pallium.' Alio modo leges possunt esse injustæ per contrarietatem ad bonum divinum, sicut leges tyrannorum inducantes ad idolatriam, vel ad quodcunque aliud, quod sit contra legem divinam; et tales leges nullo modo licet observare, quia, sicut dicitur (Acts v.), obedire oportet Deo magis quam hominibus."

nating from real and not unduly extended authority, by keeping within the limits of equity.

To sum up, in one word, the qualities of a civil law—it must, being in accordance with the eternal law, be moral, equitable, conducive to the common weal, and keep within the power of him who enacted it; qualities, indeed, which heighten its dignity, majesty, and wholesomeness.

The questions concerning law being thus discussed, we may now treat of the other function of civil authority, the establishment of rights. Yet here, before entering upon a closer inquiry, we have first to clear up the notion and the origin of right, so sadly darkened by modern philosophy. Right may be taken as conformity to the supreme rule of our actions, to reason and truth. But we do not so consider it here. Thus understood, it evidently coincides with the whole moral order. We now speak of right as conformity to the rule of strict justice. Taken in this sense, it is commonly defined in law as a claim, or an irresistible faculty to hold, do, or exact something; for it is from the relations of strict justice that such claims result, as shall be seen from what we have to say below. Of what kind, then, is that faculty? Whence is it that it ought not to be resisted, and demands absolutely a certain effect to be produced? From the time of Kant we have often heard that right consisted in actual compulsion. It indeed implies the power of enforcing a claim; as to that all jurists and moralists agree. But that power is neither physical, nor must it necessarily be put into action, as no doubt would be the case were it identical with actual compulsion. For nobody is devoid of rights because he has no physical means at hand to enforce his claims, or because he does not make use of them when his life or property is attacked. Else the waylayer would violate no right when he robs travellers weaker than himself; or it would be no injustice to put to death decrepit men or helpless children. Who could subscribe to such a doctrine? Were it so, the greatest wrong would be at once full right, and the grossest injustice would become bright justice when committed with overwhelming strength. Right, therefore, is not a physical power, and exists before and independently of compulsion. It primarily binds our neighbor, without material force, so as to render his refusal to yield to us criminal, and, secondarily, that is, when not regarded, entitles us to compel him to compliance against his will, for the reason that if it could not be enforced, our life, our property, our reputation, and whatever is most necessary for a convenient existence and the practice of virtue, would be at any moment at the mercy of the wicked and unprincipled. But, if right is not a physical, it is a moral power; if without compulsion it is to be complied with and cannot be dis-

regarded without a crime, its irresistibleness consists in a moral necessity laid on our fellow-creatures. Hence the axiom, that to every right in one answers a duty in another.

Such being the nature of right, it is evident that its force is divine, and must ultimately be derived from the Deity. God has, in fact, established it already by the eternal law. More than one reason may convince us of this truth. By the order which God has, from eternity, put in rational creation, He has not only obliged us to tend by all our actions to Him as to our supreme good and last end, but has endowed us also with the means necessary for such a tendency; nor can He permit that this disposition of His, of quite indispensable necessity, should be frustrated by human wickedness. This being so, man will have it in his power to perform certain actions, to hold and make use of certain things of which he is in need, without being impeded or disturbed by others; yea, if obstacles should be raised, to put them down by coercion. But is this not right, as defined above? Again, by His eternal law, God has established the order required by the nature of created things. Now, men being all equal as to nature, equally destined to happiness, equally bound to defend themselves and to tend to God as their last end, does not the just proportion which ought to exist between them absolutely demand that each one's liberty is fully warranted, that each one's means of subsistence and activity are set beyond the reach of others' interference; that each one's loss or cession in behalf of his fellow-creatures is regarded as a title to an equivalent compensation? Hence inviolable claims arise for the unimpeded performance of certain actions, the exclusive possession and enjoyment of our own, to a recompense for what we have yielded for the sake of others. And not only was right established by the eternal, but manifested also by the natural law. For our mind conceives certain practical principles as universal and absolutely necessary laws, by which, on the ground of our equal nature, our mutual relations are settled according to strict justice. Not a mere dry knowledge is this; it, on the contrary, constitutes in us a keen sense of right, which is deeply hurt by any outrage or disturbance committed among men.

For that reason, however, the eternal law does not prevent civil authority from establishing rights, but rather empowers it to do so. For the principles of reason are, as we said above, universal, and hence, to regulate our whole life they must be applied to our particular circumstances by inferences, and ultimately determined by modifications added. As to our social relations, the individual will never arrive at all the necessary conclusions and determinations with surety, evidence, and uniformity; and, therefore, authority must, for the sake of order, mark out by its decisions and decrees

the way in which justice is to be maintained in society. Besides, right not only lays an obligation on our fellow-creatures, but if not heeded allows us also compulsion, yea, urgently demands that its general overthrow be precluded by all means. But again, as to obtain this effect single efforts are not sufficient, and as the use of force at every one's pleasure could not but produce universal disorder, it belongs to society under the guidance of authority to lend a protective arm to right, and to avenge and assist it when trampled on. It is thus clear that civil power is instituted by God to enact rights, and that those enacted by it are endowed with a superhuman character, a divine force.

Yet, just on account of its divine origin and superior nature, human right must have certain qualities to be valid and genuine. From what we have said so far, it will not be difficult to determine them with precision. First, it must be conformable to the principles laid down in the eternal law. For, as it is instituted to derive them from that source, yet it cannot prove itself to be empowered to draw them from some other source or to form them after another model. Besides, right is the order of strict justice. But the relations of justice arise from the equality of men as to nature. Human nature, therefore, must be the standard and the foundation of all enactments concerning right. Now, as nature is represented in our general notions, so its relations are first adumbrated in our universal principles, and then, through reasoning from the latter, fully expressed and, by determinations added, completely defined. All right, then, must be derived from the principles of reason, which, as we have said above, constitute the natural and re-echo the eternal law.

Right must, secondly, lie within the boundaries of morality. The eternal law is, as was repeatedly said, the law of the moral order. But right must be conformable to the eternal law and descend from it; it must, consequently, be conformable to the moral order also and be implied in it. Again, right is the order of justice. Yet is justice not a virtue worthy of praise and reward, is it not within morality, and is its opposite not a crime, a hideous vice? Lastly, can ever an obligation to what is evil and disorderly exist? But right imposes on our neighbors a strict duty, and it is in this obligatory power that its force consists. Never, therefore, can the action or the thing to which we are entitled by right be immoral; it may be abused by human wickedness, but in itself it cannot be repugnant to morality. This inference follows with full evidence from the notion we have of right. Still the separation of right and morals is nowadays very frequent. Not Kant alone with his followers adopted it and considered it as a great advance in political science. The historical school of the jurists, headed in Ger-

many by Stahl, lets our inward life be regulated by morality, our outward or social by right. Inasmuch as socialness and the sense of justice are implanted in our heart by nature, they grant that right has its last origin in God; yet as it is the order actually developed and existing in society, they maintain it to have no reality prior to the enactment and execution of laws, and to have no other immediate source, from which it flows as such and in its proper nature, than the authority of states' governments. A consequence is, that as the interior and exterior life of man are different, right and morality are separate and sometimes even clashing; in which opposition, however, the former, being absolute and independent, is by no means bound to yield to the latter. The fault of this theory lies evidently in the false notion of right; this is taken for outward compulsion or actual force nearly as in Kant's system; its primary constituent, its moral power binding as in conscience, is altogether overlooked. The last result of such tenets would be an unlimited tyranny of the state over all individuals and in all social relations, because whatever should thus be done or called into existence would be absolutely valid right.

The third quality of right is that it ought not to exceed the power of him who establishes it. Yet on this we have not to enlarge, its necessity being too evident to need proof.

Thus law and right have the same necessary qualities, since they descend from the same divine source, regard the same end, and are allied to one another in their working.

One conclusion thoroughly opposed to modern theories we have to draw from these simple and undeniable positions. The state's authority is, as we have seen, a source of law and right; but it is not the highest nor is it universal. It is not the highest, for it is itself established by the higher, eternal law, and has to derive from this whatever it ordains. That it is not universal is not less plain. The eternal law and its manifestation, the natural, have a much wider sphere than civil authority. This latter maintains harmony and justice only in our pursuit of temporal prosperity. But the entire order of the rational creation comprises a great many other respects, as man's submission unto God as his last end, either natural or supernatural, man's thoughts and actions in his interior and private life, man's relations to others as far as he is not associated with them, man's existence and condition in his family. All that is outside the compass of the state and taken care of by the Creator through other agents. Our submission to God is conducted by religion, particularly that which is supernaturally instituted; our private and family life by the dictates of reason and the tendencies of nature, now aided by revelation. Nay, these spheres are antecedent to the state, and must be adjusted previously to its exist-

ence. For, belief in God not having fixed roots in the heart, authority, the formal constituent of society, can have no hold on us. Likewise is the individual and the family prior to the material constituents of the commonwealth. For individual nature is not given to the citizens by the state, nor does it terminate in the state as in its last end; it springs into existence and has its native freedom primarily from God, and tends to God as its ultimate object. With existence each one has the inherent right of self-defence, the right to evolve his faculties and to display his activity, in order to pursue his end, and the right to gather for himself the means conducive to its attainment. And as all these rights, termed natural or primordial, are implied in our very being, and hence warranted by the Creator, so they are unmistakably made known to every one by the light of his own reason. The state is not even the natural means of which God makes use in giving us existence and bringing us to our most necessary development. For that task domestic society alone is fitted; hence nature inclines man first to the formation of the family, and organizes this by its own laws; to the formation of the state it impels us last, and only as far as our individual faculties and our family union are not sufficient to procure that degree of temporal prosperity which is proportionate to our destination. Civil authority, therefore, is not the source of law and right for the individuals as such, for domestic and religious society, nor is it allowed to interfere with their internal relations or to subject them to its control. It is but the natural duty of the state to protect the integrity, freedom and order which God as the author of nature or of supernatural institutions intends them to have, as far as for that purpose a public temporal support may be needed or is desirable.

But have we not lessened the majesty of the state's authority by thus limiting its power and divesting it of absoluteness? By no means; we have but confined it to the sphere which nature has allotted to it, and just when it keeps within these bounds, it appears before us in its highest grandeur and dignity. It is then a cause of universal prosperity, the defender of freedom, the support of peace and harmony; its actions are guided by reason, prudence, and justice, its decrees flow from the eternal principles founded on the nature of things, and its legislation extends and realizes the wonderful order which God with infinite wisdom has drawn up for the happiness of mankind. What a difference between laws enacted according to this idea and the absolute will of the sovereign monarch or people not subject to the rule of God, not actuated by the desire of the welfare of all, but by tumultuous or wily passions and narrow self-interest?

We have now by many and long researches traced back au-

thority to its superhuman origin, to the divine sovereignty itself, and have hence deduced the superior character and force of all its functions. Still we have not yet solved our problem. We have thus far spoken of authority merely as it is the power of reducing to unity by strict obligations the free will of the multitude. But we have made abstraction from the subject in which it is vested. It is time now to turn our attention to this side of the question. If we did not take it into consideration, we would not fully explain either the source from which power springs into existence or the causes and conditions which concur in giving it proper activity. A most important point is thus yet left for our discussion.

To arrive in this inquiry at a satisfactory result with due method and order, we have first to make some remarks on the qualifications of those to be invested with authority. They must have the capacity to make that use of power which answers its end and nature, just as the body to be informed by the soul must be fit to subserve the functions of the latter, and is not quickened before it is endowed accordingly. The lodging of authority in persons unfit for its exercise would be, indeed, a great absurdity. How, then, ought the proper subject of the principle of social life and unity to be qualified? Its intellect must be gifted with such wisdom as enables it to know the real end of society and to find out the appropriate means to attain that end under the given circumstances by the maintenance of justice, order, and harmony. Its will must be free from self-interest and partiality, noble enough to be bent only on the common welfare, and sufficiently energetic to succumb to no adversity or hostile opposition. In addition to this, it must have at its disposal, exterior power, to make itself respected, and, if necessary, to enforce subjection. At last, it must be one, if not physically, at least morally, that is, it must, if it is composed of many persons, be so organized as to result in one will and action, for as social unity proceeds from authority, this cannot be itself divided and torn asunder in those in whom it comes into existence. We have thus given the qualities of the subject of supreme power, not as it commonly exists, but as it ought to be. As man seldom reaches ideals, so rulers will not easily attain their highest standard. Such excellence is, as a rule, far above frail human nature. Still those who are to be set over others should as much as possible have these endowments, and if in essential points they fall short of them, so far as not to be able at all to have the care of the public welfare, they ought to be judged unfit for such a trust.

Next, in order to consider him who can vest authority, we have to ascend to its source; for is it not plain that he who creates power has also to intrust it? Were authority, then, as modern

thinkers tell us, a product of the will of men, whether taken collectively or individually, it would, no doubt, primarily rest in the people and be conferred on particular persons only by popular delegation. Hobbes excepted, all modern theorists in fact agree in proclaiming the sovereignty of the people, and in denouncing those who attribute this prerogative to the monarch or the government. But we cannot adopt this view. Civil power, we know, is an emanation of God's sovereignty, a communication of His authority; and He can therefore intrust it to whom, and in what manner, He likes. Besides Him nobody can claim an inherent right to have a part in this act of appointing rulers; for who may pretend to confer what does not belong to him, but originates entirely in the supreme Divine majesty?

Two ways may be conceived in which God can communicate authority. He may vest it either immediately by Himself, or mediately through the co-operation of man and the course of human events. He has, in reality, in the natural as well as supernatural order, sometimes directly pointed out the persons who were to govern. Thus in the Old Testament He instituted monarchy among His chosen people, and bestowed royalty on Saul, and David and his descendants, making known His will through the prophets. In the New Testament Christ also has immediately established the ecclesiastical government by conferring His mission and His power forever on the body of the Apostles, headed by St. Peter, though as to the designation of their successors men have to concur by their free co-operation. In the natural order God Himself has appointed the head of the conjugal and domestic society, as He qualified the man, and not the woman, for governing. But as to the state, He has not determined who should exercise sway over it. He has made civil society a natural want of ours, and has by creation implanted in us an inclination to form it. Yet that is all that He has done directly. What is hence to be inferred? Indeed, that there must be civil power, since without it society cannot exist; but who is to wield it, we cannot in the least gather from nature itself. From its consideration we cannot know whether power ought to be in the hands of one or many, of these or of those individuals, for all forms of government, the monarchical, the aristocratical, and democratical, may be conducive to the public welfare, and numerous are those who are fit for its exercise. Nor can it be maintained that in society founded by creation rulers will be appointed by supernatural intervention, for natural societies will be preserved and provided for by the course of nature.

In this regard James I. of England put forth an unheard-of error. He thought kings were placed on their thrones by God without any co-operation on the part of men, as once Saul and

David had been called to reign. His intention was thus to raise the civil over the ecclesiastical power. But Bellarmine and Suarez entered the lists against the royal theologian, and proved the contrary to be the truth ever held in Christendom. Their teaching was applauded by all Catholics, and James's opinion was soon rejected as extravagant, even by Protestants.

Now, if neither nature nor divine intervention has marked out the holders of power, must not human events appoint them? What other way is still left? However, as to the manner in which this effect may be obtained, some further explanations are needed. First, it is not necessary that it result from popular elections. Sometimes the course of events itself, without any consent or contract on the side of the citizens, sets up a leader of the state, giving him such evident claims to the government that nobody can reasonably question their validity. Does this not happen nearly as often as the members of the state, before or at its formation, are already, on some other account, dependent on a person of weight and influence, because they hold either land from him in tenure, or are under his patriarchal authority, or owe him their safety, or other signal advantages? In such cases all are bound by gratitude and reverence to acknowledge him as their political head; nor could, besides him, anybody have the exterior power necessary for a ruler. History bears witness to many a fact of that kind. Still, we grant that, in many other instances, the course of human events has not established a government. If this be the case, it is evident that God has committed its appointment to the choice of men. Then they may set up for it, as they deem it good, one or several persons; they may moreover bind those who obtain power by a fundamental contract, and may, as they like, settle the succession, and require for certain laws, or the levy of taxes, the consent of the people or some classes. So, during the Middle Ages, frequently monarchs were enthroned and republican constitutions drawn up. All such transactions have to be regarded as good and valid, since therein men were left free by the Creator, and are under no other obligation than that of adopting such a government, and of choosing such magistrates as will be most fit to promote the common weal.

What is, however, the precise effect which men produce by their co-operation in the appointment of governments? This question presented itself already to former ages, and in solving it there is a slight difference even between Catholic writers. Some think that the first and immediate subject in which authority is vested is the multitude, yet that this, being unfit for its proper exercise, is bound by natural law to transfer it permanently to certain persons appointed for government. The co-operation of

men would, consequently, in this opinion, consist in the transfer of power to chosen holders. Others, on the contrary, say that civil society is but allowed to point out the subject which is to be intrusted with governmental power. Accordingly the co-operation of the people would consist in the designation of proper persons, whilst the conferring of authority would be exclusively the work of God. The difference between the two views has very nicely been stated by Balmes. "In the opinion of some," he writes, "God says: 'Society, for thy preservation and well-being, thou requirest a government; choose, therefore, under what form this government shall be exercised, and appoint the persons who are to take charge of it; I, on my part, will confer on them the faculties necessary for the fulfilment of their mission.' In the opinion of others God says: 'Society, for thy preservation and well-being, thou requirest a government; I confer upon thee the faculties necessary for the fulfilment of this object; choose thyself the form under which this government shall be exercised, and appoint the persons who are to take charge of it, transmit to them the faculties which I have communicated to thee.' "[1] The opinion that lets the people transmit their authority to the appointed magistrates, was adopted by Bellarmine and Suarez in their writings against King James; the other, permitting the people only to choose the persons whom God himself will clothe with authority, is embraced by several excellent authors of our day; as for instance, Cardinal Hergenröther, Fathers Taparelli and Liberatore. A practical difference between the one and the other is scarcely perceptible; the point in controversy is chiefly theoretical. Still it will not be without interest to weigh their respective intrinsic values.

At first sight, the one followed by Catholic authors of the day might seem to be in contradiction with Christian antiquity, because Bellarmine and Suarez aim to set forth no new doctrine, but to teach what had always and everywhere been believed in Christendom. This assertion is, in reality, true as far as the real point at issue is concerned in their controversy with King James; that is, the appointment of civil government, not by the immediate intervention of God, but with the co-operation of men; yet, it is to be denied that it holds also as to the manner in which they thought the people should concur in the setting up of authorities. As to this, it would be rather difficult to show a settled universal opinion among the ancient theologians. There are, on the other hand, very good intrinsic reasons, which strongly support the recent theory, and seem to prove the inadequacy of the old. One or the other we shall advance.

When the citizens, in the opinion of Bellarmine and Suarez,

[1] European Civilization, chap. li.

transmit their authority to the chosen magistrates, they do not act individually, but as a whole, or a body politic; they are then already a subject invested with power by the Author of nature, and as such perform a common action, which has the quality of a law or contract, binding forever both the government and the governed. This is expressly agreed to by the authors mentioned, and is one of the points by which they essentially differ from the advocates of the social contract. But therein a contradiction seems to be implied. For the multitude, as such, is either a fit subject for the exercise of authority, or it is not. If it is not a fit subject, authority is not vested in it; since forms do not take existence in an unfit substratum, nor is it compatible with God's wisdom to delegate power to persons unable to wield it. If, on the contrary, the multitude is fit for the exercise of authority, why is it not allowed to retain it, but is bound by a natural law to transmit it to magistrates permanently and irrevocably? Why should he, who, as a fit holder, possesses authority by a natural right, by the same law of nature be obliged to renounce it, and be forbidden to make use of it as he thinks proper? The dilemma is not easily to be solved. What part of the alternative do the illustrious writers choose? They are altogether for the unfitness of the multitude, for it is on this account that they think it bound to transmit its authority on appointed magistrates. But do they not contradict themselves, when they thus declare the people at the same time to be fit to receive authority as its primordial subject, and to be unfit to possess and exercise it as its proper holder? Do they not thus deny the principle appealed to in all their theological and philosophical discussions, and adhered to by themselves in this very question, that for the recognition of a form a subject well predisposed is necessary?

But, perhaps, it may be said that the people, though not fitted permanently to retain and to exercise power, are, nevertheless, able, at least temporarily, to receive and to transact it? May not thus any contradiction be avoided? We answer that they who are unable to exercise power, must simply be considered as unfit to hold it; and hence it is improper to say that authority is immediately conferred on them, and not on such as are for its use completely fitted. This will become more evident, when we search into the reason why the people are thought to be unfit for government. Their unfitness lies undoubtedly in the lack of unity. The very notions of multitude and unity imply contradiction. Everybody is aware that out of the many few are chosen, because it is else impossible to form such a ruling body as will, by the oneness and harmony of its organism, prove one energetic government. But unity is a quite essential qualification of the subject of supreme power. Hence we cannot well conceive that the multitude is pri-

marily and originally intrusted with authority, and deem it more proper to say that the people, by choosing governors or adjusting political constitutions, only set up the well-fitted and united subject, to which God himself directly communicates the formal constituent of society, governmental power. Let it not be said that, by democracy, the multitude really possesses supreme sway. For even in a republic the right of suffrage is not granted to all alike, but to those only who are thought to be able to make use of it in behalf of the public welfare; and not the multitude in any condition whatever, but the multitude reduced to a certain organization is the holder of sovereign power. A people not organized at all, a mere crowd of individuals, of whatever qualities, all with equal rights and powers, would not be a democratical state, but an anarchical confusion.

Another reason against the theory in question is, as Cardinal Hergenröther remarks,[1] that it does not cover all the ways in which states are constituted. It at most holds good when the forms of government are adopted and rulers appointed by the choice of the people. But, as we have shown above, this is by no means the only proximate origin of magistrates. Governments spring into existence also without any consent or contract on the part of the multitude by the course of human events. And this not only happened frequently, but, moreover, resulted in a quite convenient development of civil society. As the soul, the substantial form of man, is communicated to a body not fully developed, but still contained in its natural germ; and as it is then united with the body, it brings forth a perfect organism; so it is in the formation of political unions quite proper that first authority, the formal principle, be imparted to a subject prepared by social nature in the course of its evolution, and then the entire frame of society is built up. Yea, this way of forming a state is, in many regards, more natural than the opposite; for the production of the complete political organization is the most difficult work, and it is evident that it is effected rather under the influence and direction of authority, the formal constituent, than by the shapeless multitude. Certainly, in the foundation of the Church, Christ has chosen this way; He did not call the multitude of the faithful to beget the ecclesiastical government, but instituted the ecclesiastical authority to gather and unite the multitude of the faithful.

For good reasons, therefore, is it maintained that not the people but the government is the primordial holder of supreme power, and that consequently, also, when magistrates are chosen, men only designate those who are to rule, yet God confers on the rulers designated authority, as an emanation of His own sovereignty. It

[1] Katholische Kirche und Christlicher Staat, XIV., 8. Neue abgekürzte Ausgabe.

will not be unseasonable here to call the attention of the reader to the very words which the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XIII., uses in explaining what part the people may take in the appointment of governments, since they seem quite to confirm the recent theory just expounded and defended. "It is," says he, "of importance to notice that they who are set over the state may, in certain cases, be chosen by the will and decision of the people, without any opposition or repugnance to Catholic doctrine. By this choice, however, the ruler is designated, but the rights of government are not conferred, and power is not given, but it is determined by whom it is to be wielded."

Even on this designation of the persons to be invested with power, the multitude acts as a secondary, and by no means as the principal cause. We must here, also, rise above that which is visible to a higher, divine principle, which directs human activity. The traces which lead us to it are quite apparent. Men associate, not merely by their free will, but chiefly by the tendency of nature. Yet society cannot exist without authority, and authority not without a determinate subject in which it is vested. Nature, therefore, will tend also to the determination of such a subject. Does it not do so when it produces men, however equal as to their essence, altogether unequal as to their individual qualities and circumstances, one dependent on the other, in his very existence or in the most vital points, one with higher, the other with lower endowments, when, granting freedom to all, it lets our acquirements and our actions differ nearly as widely as its own limits? Does it not by this inequality and mutual dependence of men sometimes so distinctly point out those who are to wield power, that there is no more room for free choice? And though it does not always go so far, it never leaves the appointment of a government simply to our freaks; it will always incline us to choose, among unequal men, those as rulers who are fittest to take charge of the public good, and it will give us no rest unless all obey its command. Now, is not God the author of nature and its inborn tendencies? Is it not, therefore, He who chiefly directs the setting up of authorities? Besides, civil society falls in a particular manner under the care of Divine Providence, since by it man is furnished with several means altogether necessary for the attainment of his destination. But what is to society more essential than authority, and more important than the vesting of authority in a fit holder? And is, moreover, as God is the first and immediate source of authority, the appointment of the persons who are to exercise it not also chiefly His work, so much so that nobody can perform that act unless ordered or commissioned by Him? There is hence no doubt that the designation of rulers is a particular object of

His care, and that when men, in whatever manner, co-operate in it, they act, notwithstanding their freedom, under His universal and supreme superintendence.

From this consideration the conclusion is drawn that the legitimate rulers are designated to hold their power, also, by God himself, not as though, according to King James's theory, men were not called in to concur in this appointment, but because the human agency is therein instrumental in the hands of God. In this sense governments are said by many Catholic writers to have been put in power, not by merely human but by divine right, since they receive authority directly from on high, and are destined to possess it by divine dispensation. Not all ancient authors have adopted this way of speaking. Still this at least was once a custom universal in Christendom, approved of by jurists as well as theologians, that those lawfully intrusted with supreme civil power were called rulers *by the grace of God.* That title embodied a great Christian idea, implanted again in the mind by Christian religion; it expressed the conviction of the sacred character of magistrates, of their appointment, not by the mere will of men, but chiefly by Divine Providence. It would, however, be wrong to think this appellation to be due only to kings and emperors, though they in particular were honored with it, for republics may be brought into being by the course of human events, the exigency of circumstances, and the consent of men, just as rightfully as monarchies, and hence republican no less than monarchical governments exist by the will and grace of God.

With this conclusion we have reached the end of our discussion; we have traced back civil authority to God as its true source; we have proved that, taken abstractly, it flows from His Divine Sovereignty, and considered concretely, obtains existence in determinate holders by the care of His supreme Providence. Proceeding from the simplest and plainest principles, we have thus developed the theory which Christian philosophers ever maintained, the Church of God inculcated in all ages, and Divine Revelation undoubtedly contains. For the doctrine of the divine origin of power is, in all its main features, found not only in the ecclesiastical documents, in the writings of the Fathers, the briefs and bulls of the Roman Pontiffs, but also in Holy Writ.[1] But we have explained also a system which is for many an abomination, because decried in the non-Catholic world as a destruction of freedom and a support of tyranny. We therefore, before concluding, have yet

[1] As to the divine origin of power, taken abstractly, see Proverbs viii., 15; Wisdom 6, 3; Romans xiii., 1; I. St. Peter ii., 13. As to the designation of the holders of power by Divine Providence, see Ecclesiasticus x., 4, 8, 17; xvii., 14; Job xxxiv., 30.

to show what bearing the theory expounded has on public life. This once being understood, all the objections raised against it and of late again circulated by the press will easily prove misconceptions or malicious inventions.

What, then, are its effects? What advantages has it for the rulers and for the subjects? It is plain at first sight that the holders of authority delegated by God are surrounded with the highest splendor and majesty possible. They stand before the people as ministers of God, invested, not with human, but with divine power, and issue orders and enact laws, not in their own name, but by authorization from on high. Their character is above that of governors set up by the will of men in proportion as God is higher than His creatures, and His wisdom and power is greater than that of all the nations of the earth. Still there is in this nothing of that deification of princes which we meet in heathen antiquity. The rulers remain mortal men, subject to human frailty; only the authority with which they are clothed is Divine, and this they have not of themselves, but of God; it is but for a time lent to them, as the light of the sun is thrown upon the moon. Authority of a Divine character, furthermore, enables governments to exercise control over the subjects with great energy and efficacy. For it works primarily, not on their bodies, though it allows coercion if necessary, but on their consciences; it binds their free wills with a tie that no passion, no egotistic tendency, however vehement, can shake off, and lays them under an obligation which, being valid in the sight of God, cannot be infringed without the heaviest of all penalties,—the loss of happiness. Thus it is sufficient to subject us to order, not only before the eyes of others, but also in secret; not only when we are weak and devoid of the means of resistance, but also when we have the physical power to defy its commands with impunity. What is merely human sovereignty, which, being but the power of compulsion, maintains a certain external order through the material force wielded by the stronger, if compared with this Divinely established rule, which, being moral and Divine, governs the will by the inviolable law of morality and justice?

Steadfastness and firmness is another important advantage which power derives from its Divine origin. Stability, we said in the previous article, is of indispensable necessity for the efficacy and success of a government, and we charged the modern systems with deficiency on the score that they rendered governmental power liable to endless changes. Yet never is the administration of public affairs set so far above the fluctuations of human mutability as when it is grounded on Divine right. No will of the predominant party, not even the people, is then powerful enough

to lessen or abolish the essential prerogatives of the rulers; for they were established by the eternal law of God. No political agitations, no freaks of the populace, no machinations of the ambitious will easily transfer power from one individual to another, from this to that body of holders; for its vesting must, according to the intention of the Supreme Sovereign, be regulated by laws according to the dictates of reason, and the possession of it once lawfully obtained, depending less on the will of man than on Divine Providence, has become an inviolable right. Every attempt, therefore, to outrage the persons of the rulers, or to deprive them of their power, or to plot against their administration, will be criminal; and the more will such acts be universally detested and abhorred, the deeper the conviction of the Divine origin of authority has been rooted.

Is not, however, this majesty, efficacy, and stability of power a temptation to abuse for its possessors? There is no reason for such misgivings. Conscious of having received their authority in trust, not for their own advantage, but for the public good, the rulers must know the people to be committed to their care, and not to their arbitrariness. If they nevertheless misuse their eminent position for their private interest or the gratification of their passions, it cannot escape them that they are guilty of an enormous crime, certain to be punished by the Supreme Judge in heaven. Oppressors cannot but hear in their conscience the threat uttered against them in the Book of Wisdom (vi., 4): "Power is given you by the Lord, and strength by the Most High, who will examine your works, and search out your thoughts: because, being ministers of this kingdom, you have not judged rightly, nor kept the law of justice, nor walked according to the will of God. Horribly and speedily will he appear to you, for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. For to him that is little, mercy is granted; but the mighty shall be mightily tormented." This fear of the Supreme Lord and Omniscient Judge will be more powerful with governors than that of the sovereign people, which may be deceived and kept down by the force of arms. The nation itself, when clothed with sovereignty, is restrained from tyranny by the responsibility under which it is to God no less than kings; for it, too, is bound by the Divine law, and has power, not of itself, but from the Creator. The theory expounded, therefore, does not prop the absoluteness of Oriental monarchs, or serve the lusts of princes, or yield to the fickleness of the dominant multitude; it combines strength with justice, the constant care for our well-being with sway.

Of no less importance are the advantages which from these views result for the people. As the Divine character of power

raises and upholds the governors, and yet deters them from misrule and despotism, so it most efficaciously induces the governed to obedience, and nevertheless protects their rights and liberty. The thought that authority is ordained of God, and that those who are invested with it are His ministers, forcibly commands submission, because it brings to our cognizance a Divine obligation to comply with the laws and orders issued. Yet at the same time it gives sweetness to obedience, because it shows what is enjoined on us to be the will and disposition of Him who, with infinite wisdom and bounty, intends but our happiness. In those circumstances in particular in which allegiance requires greater sacrifices on our part, at the time of public dangers and calamities, authority that is known to come from God and to be possessed rightfully will in general be obeyed, not with fear alone and reverence, but also with reliance, if not on the persons of the rulers, at least in God's Providence. A nation imbued with such ideas will, upon the whole, be law-abiding and quiet, and even under the most burdensome duties, when all legal means of redress are exhausted, not resort to violence, but recur to God, who has in His hands the hearts of kings and establishes governments as He pleases. Nowhere will less compulsion be necessary to enforce the laws, nowhere will peace, tranquillity, and order be productive of greater prosperity than where the power of the government is derived from the Source of all good.

Nor are, for this reason, the people stripped of their dignity and rights, or delivered up to the tyranny of princes. We might mention that obedience itself is highly dignified, if yielded not to human, but to Divine power. But now let us rather consider the nature of Divine authority, to see how little it tends to the oppression or degradation of the subjects. True, according to the opinion we defended, it abides in the organs fitted for its exercise, and not in the multitude. Yet for that it has not become for this reason a heavy burden. It exists in society as the power of seeing is in man, though directly seated in the eyes, and as the head is in the body, though distinct from all other members; it exists on account of society, because the latter cannot be at all without the former, and hence from the institution of the one by Nature the existence of the other necessarily follows; it exists for society, because its only end and purpose is the public welfare. Modern politicians boast of having made a great discovery in behalf of liberty when they proclaimed the principle that the government is for the people and not the people for the government. The axiom was no novelty; it is in no theory of power so necessarily implied as in the Catholic, and has, indeed, at all times been inculcated by Catholic writers. St. Thomas, the angelic doctor of the Middle

Ages, reminds the princes of it in very grave terms. "The kingdom," says he, "is not made for the king, but the king for the kingdom; for God has constituted kings to rule and govern, and to secure to every one the possession of his rights; such is the aim of their institution; but if kings, turning things to their own profit, should act otherwise, they are no longer kings, but tyrants."[1] Nay, in the opinion of ancient as well as modern theologians, it is so essential to authority to benefit and protect the people that laws enacted by it evidently in opposition to equity and to the common weal, are null and void, and can lay no claim to obedience.

Moreover, the theory of the Divine origin of authority affords all possible means to prevent oppression. It lays no hindrance to the clothing of power in several persons, or to the election of the magistrates by the people. It excludes no real improvement invented for a good and just administration; it admits of all forms of government, of the republican no less than the monarchical. What is of still greater importance and still better secures our liberty, are the limits it fixes to authority. According to it the state's sovereignty is not boundless and absolute, but altogether subject to a higher rule, the eternal and natural law, in conformity with which it must always act. There are prior to it other rights and duties in private life, in domestic and religious society, which it must protect, but cannot change or abolish. It is itself, in the great order of the rational creation, but a limited and subordinate sphere ordained only for the purpose of promoting temporal prosperity. Now this limitation not only sets us, in many regards, beyond the reach of the civil government, but also removes from it unbounded, all-absorbing absolutism, the chief cause of tyranny. When, therefore, modern philosophers and politicians denounce the Catholic theory as a support of oppressors, they entangle themselves in an evident self-contradiction. They assert that authority, to be safe from misuse, must be intrusted to many holders, who watch and counterbalance one another. Yet, at the same time, whilst on that account they extol modern institutions as bulwarks of freedom, and warn us against Catholic despotism, they concentrate in the civil sovereign all possible power, and give him control over all things, over policy, commerce, science, religion, without granting us the possibility of appealing to a higher authority. How is this consistent? Do they not accumulate while we divide power? Do they not render it altogether unlimited, whereas we carefully limit it and make it dependent on a higher rule? Where, therefore, is there danger of tyranny?

Let us refer the decision of this question to history. What

[1] De Regimine Principum, lib. iii., p. 11.

maxims were acted upon whenever a government turned out tyrannical? The rulers dared to outrage, by their policy, justice and morality, render religion subservient to political interests, encroach on the rights and the liberty of families and individuals. Of the subjects, too, many partook of their iniquity out of selfishness, betrayed the Church to the state, and cowardly gave up their primordial natural rights; for a sound and moral nation can by no dynasty, however bold and mighty, be for a long time degraded into slavery. It was, hence, the obliteration of the principles of the Catholic theory in both princes and subjects that made oppression possible; it was unbounded sway, usurped by the one and ceded by the other, that fostered and consolidated tyranny.

Another fact, if reflected on without prejudice, must strike every thoughtful mind and convince it of the truth we assert. The Catholic Church has always upheld the Divine origin of civil power, yet the distinction of this power from domestic and from unjust authority. Has she, therefore, been the friend of tyrants? She was the very one that put the greatest hindrance to their oppressive measures. When nobody ventured to resist the mighty who trampled on the individual and on the laws of justice, she, conscious of being intrusted with supernatural power, power independent of the state, rose fearlessly to rebuke the oppressor and to defend the oppressed, though frequently herself fettered, insulted, wounded. Not seldom, from her struggles with the haughty kings and emperors, the rays of liberty burst forth on whole nations. For instance, we may go back to the times of William Rufus and St. Anselm of Canterbury, of Henry II. and St. Thomas à Becket, of the Emperor Henry IV. and St. Gregory VII., of Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III., of Napoleon I. and Pius VII. Conversely, tyrants and governments wielded absolute power, always hostile to the Church; they all endeavored to render her subject to their laws or to destroy her. Either the one or the other was thought to be a necessary condition of their absolute rule. In fact, absolutism and oppression, even in matters of conscience, never grew ranker than after the time of the Reformation, when the spiritual power had been swallowed up by the temporal, when the state had been declared to be absolutely supreme, the source of all right, the all-ruling centre of human life. Liberty, then, we infer from all this, is on the side of the divinely established, well-limited power, and not on that of the absolute, all-powerful, atheistical state.

By these few remarks we think we have shown to evidence the great and wholesome consequences of the Catholic theory of civil power. It wonderfully combines power with liberty, obedience with personal dignity; it fits out the government to put order by its laws in the state, and at the same time ennobles the subjects and

protects their rights; it establishes irresistible sway over us, yet defines and balances it so that it is bound to maintain justice and to produce prosperity. It is for such excellence that a splendor of Divine wisdom shines forth from this scheme. Who could not see in this organization of society a Divine plan, a lustre of reason and a profusion of the bounty of God, as in the marvellous harmony of the universe we cannot but acknowledge a reflection of the divine intellect? For an order comprising so many things, so admirably reconciling freedom with necessity, so equal and just in all its relations, so firm as to its foundation, so effective and beneficent in its operations, cannot be the invention of a human mind.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF INTROSPECTION.

THE history of the past of mankind is the history of those radical changes in its life which are wrought by the march of time on one hand, and by the progress of civilization on the other. Of these changes, political, social and religious, the human race leaves an imprint behind in the art, science and literature of each period, and in nearly every domain of knowledge belonging to that period. New modes of thought obtain currency, new habits are acquired, inventions and discoveries are made, facilitating their diffusion; and all this very forcibly impresses upon observant minds the fact that life, after all, is but a continuous change, applied either to the individual or to society at large. In this way progress and civilization have become identified in the popular mind with the idea that they are simply synonyms of the term "change." We are born into this world, we live a little while in it, we die and pass away from it. The child is born and becomes an infant, the infant grows into manhood or womanhood, reaches a point of culmination, declines perhaps into old age, and then life ends. This is the brief history which tells the fate of all mortals; and what else is it but a record of continuous transformation? Change, ever-recurring change, appears, therefore, as the most marked characteristic of life; as a fact undisputed, because indisputable.

The theory of "change" applies, indeed, to life in all its phases, but there runs through life at the same time an undercurrent of an entirely different character. Between the narrow limits drawn by

birth on one hand, and by cold pitiless death on the other, there moves that stream of hope and despair, of friendship and enmity, of love and hatred, which determines for each whether his term of terrestrial existence has been one of happiness or of misery. That current depends upon agencies which remain the selfsame at all times and under all circumstances, and these silent agencies constitute in the ever-surging ocean of life the only changeless elements. If we glance back over a period of some two thousand years, we see that the civilization of Greece and Rome was superseded by that of the Middle Ages, and that mediæval civilization in turn gave way to that of modern times. Yet, the desire for happiness, for instance, dwelt as strongly in the breast of the Greek and Roman, and of the semi-barbarians which swept over Europe in the fourth and fifth centuries, as it does in the generations of our times. The same passions ruled in antiquity and in mediæval times whose violent throbbings cause so much apprehension in our days. Nations appear and disappear, but the perennial longings of the human heart are transmitted unchanged, as a patrimony not dependent upon time and place and surroundings, not subjected to their disintegrating influence, but immaculate, in pristine virginity, in every human breast.

Now these elements of life possess a very vital importance whenever any issue, involving the entirety of life, is being dealt with. For, it must obviously lead to erroneous conclusions to take cognizance of the outward manifestations of human activity only, and to ignore the inner springs of life. And this, it seems to us, has been one of the most fruitful sources of error in the formation of opinions regarding the question of religion and its issues. Our times appear deeply concerned with subjects like "the decline of faith," "the decay of Christianity," "the disintegration of the Church," and the like. It is pretty generally recognized, what even the most rudimentary knowledge of the past teaches us, namely, that religion and life are correlative terms. But not a few neglected to inquire into, or if they did, failed to grasp the true relationship subsisting between them, and, in consequence thereof, life- or death-sentences have been pronounced upon one creed or another with an air of gravity and with all serious earnestness, which are, at best, *ægri somnia vana.* Religion, let it be emphasized, is an expression of human nature only when it is stripped of all appendages of time and place. The outward life of mankind is being cast into fresh moulds and is taking new shape and form with every age, but the inner life presents always the selfsame characteristics. These considerations make it self-evident that no opinion deserves to be entitled to the serious attention of society, unless it be based upon a careful study of man's inner

structure, and the extent to which a religious system corresponds with his manifold wants.

These general remarks, we hope, have cleared the ground sufficiently to let us perceive that the introspection of life alone, or rather of the unchangeable elements of life, furnishes the means of formulating a view worth having, upon any of the issues with which we are here indirectly concerned.

The points of contact between religion and humanity are many. The evidence of the past compels us to concede that some sort of "belief" presents itself as an irrepressible want of human nature. And if we inspect all creeds of which we possess any knowledge, with a view to singling out an element common to all, we again encounter "belief." Thus "belief" is one point of contact. Again, right and wrong are distinctions drawn between certain lines of action by religion as well as by society, so that morality may be said to form another point of contact. Again, happiness, a happiness untarnished by any shadow, stands ever as an ideal before man's elevated ambition, for which he has endeavored to reach out at all times. And happiness, a happiness undefiled, is the promise of the future, held out by nearly all religions to their adherents. Here, then, we have some precincts which religion and humanity occupy between themselves. It is manifest, moreover, from the very nature of the case, that in the inner structure of human nature there must be given *that* which religion is intended to complement, to perfect, to elevate, to satisfy; and whatever religion performs this office in the most perfect and complete manner, *that* religion and that *alone*, we are warranted in predicating, will be the one to which the theory of the survival of the fittest will apply.

We proceed now to examine more minutely some of the common territory. The most patent, and consequently the least disputed and at the same time also the most prominent, element of religious feeling consists in what is called "conscience," a power of which we know very little besides the fact that it does exist. It may be defined as the consciousness of right and wrong. It descends upon all human beings as an unquestioned birthright. Perhaps it may be urged that the notions as to what is right and what wrong, differ so widely that conscience cannot be taken as a central and common force of universal human nature. It is quite true that the notions of right and wrong have differed and do differ, but this is a matter with which we are here not concerned at all. It suffices entirely for our purpose that the consciousness of right and wrong, as an abstract perception of the intellect, inseparable from human nature, links the cultured agnostic of the nineteenth century to his half-savage ancestor. We do not inquire *why* the notions

of the one are crude, raw, uncouth, and those of the other developed into a delicate sensibility; but we ask simply, why is this notion extant in both? To this query but one answer can be made, which is not alone acceptable to reason, but likewise borne out by experience. Conscience is a universal patrimony, because of a universal intuitive knowledge, no matter how indefinite, that some standard of right and wrong has been established by some power above us, and that we are bound to conform our lives to this standard. This implies a belief, again quite indefinite, that right conduct is rewarded, and wrong conduct punished; in other words, that we are endowed with free-will, and impair or advance our prospects of reaching that happiness for which we cannot help longing by the choice which we make for the shaping of our conduct through life. Whether the innate desire for happiness take the form of looking forward towards reaching Nirvana, or of hoping for a communion of saints, with direct intercourse with the Deity and participation in divine felicity, does not matter in the least. Dogmatism lies in this search far beyond our sphere, since its issues run in strata which we are not at all investigating at present. Thus belief, faith, that fundamental principle of all religious systems, owes its existence to a want of human nature; for, as we have seen, conscience, the root of all belief, rests only and solely upon the intuitive knowledge of a power, superhuman and greater than ourselves, that made a standard of right and wrong for us. Religion springs, therefore, from nature itself, and is as old as nature.

The general consideration of the necessity of religion enables us, however, to draw some very important conclusions. In the first place the necessity of a definite form of belief appears no longer doubtful, and all religions of the past present themselves simply as attempts to furnish humanity that requisite definite belief. In the second place, it is quite clear that but *one* religion can be in full accord with human nature, for the coexistence of two *systems* means necessarily the coexistence of two different standards of morality, which is an absurd monstrosity and logically impossible, if they are, as they would have to be, absolute standards.

Retracing our steps into the past again, we will ascertain now how far the creeds in force prior to the advent of Christianity responded to that universal craving for a definite belief, which the analysis of conscience established as a prime requisite of human nature. As regards classic Paganism, as it lived and ruled in the popular mind of Greece and Rome, the most striking fact, as Mr. W. S. Lilly, in a paper, "Supernaturalism, Mediæval and Classic," so well observes, is the wellnigh total absence from it of any idea at all nearly corresponding to that which the term "God" conveys, more or less distinctly, to the European mind of the present

day. Deep down in the heart of antiquity, underlying all religious conceptions, was the idea of a Supreme Will, irresistible, inscrutable, inexorable. This vague, mysterious, awful power was personified as "*Fatum*," which ruled not only over the generations of mortal men, but likewise over the immortal anthropomorphic deities, and formed the nearest approximation to what we understand by the word "God." This all-pervading fatalism is the key to the religions and philosophies of Paganism. The indefiniteness and obscurity of this notion of a Supreme Ruler failed, of course, to offer any satisfaction to the imperative demand of human nature for a definite belief, and led the innate tendency to believe to put out shoots in other directions. Thus we find a belief in invisible realities, surrounding man on every side, and a belief in powers and agencies, superhuman and directly and intimately affecting man. Nor is this the only effect produced by the absence of a less certain idea of God. It disabled ancient Polytheism, nay, rendered it absolutely powerless to represent any ethical idea or to establish any standard by which life should be governed. It had nothing to offer to the inquiries of a restless heart. The office of all propitiatory sacrifices consisted merely in assuaging the fear of that righteous retribution, of the existence of which the teachings of conscience gave warning. Inadequate and impotent as the creeds of Paganism were, they were on that account doomed to crumble to pieces when brought in contact with a religious system less wanting in the most essential requisite, namely, adaptation to man's nature.

Before the advent of Christianity there existed but one theistic conception in which men could and did believe, namely, the one possessed by the Hebrews and transmitted by them from generation to generation. The Jews alone knew God as a living God, the fountain of life, supreme Lawgiver and Judge of men, yet a merciful God, listening to prayers and standing in direct relationship with the people. The elect tribe of Northern Semites had a definite God, and hence a definite law, yet an impassable gulf separated, as it were, the finite creature from the Infinite, preventing human nature from rising to the inaccessible heights on which He was enthroned. He was too far removed from humanity to be approached with other feelings than those of awe and fear. Thus even the Jewish faith did not come up fully to the requirements of humanity in that sphere. More had to be given than was given to the Hebrews, in order to encompass mankind's clamorings, and Christianity, at last, gave it.

The mediæval era is ushered in with the God-man as central figure. The bright beams of light which the new religion shed profusely soon chased away Paganism's gloomy and dark vision

of fate, and turned the feelings of awe and fear of the Hebrew conception into those of love and friendship. The Word made flesh was God, indeed, but was man also, full of compassion, of love, of sympathy, ever ready to lift our burdens and attracting by His luminous beauty all alike. The Incarnation is the bridge which forever spans the shores of divinity and humanity, and by the Cross life's perplexing mysteries were solved. Life was no longer a hopeless struggle, happiness no longer beyond the reach of mortal arm. The sting of death was removed, the keen edge of suffering taken away. Passion and virtue, which had occupied overlapping territories, were assigned districts of their own, and between these a line of demarcation was drawn. Society was furnished a code of ethics, which to this day has been admitted by believers as well as unbelievers to be unsurpassed in its matchless perfection. To be sure, there was much left that still remained unfathomable, but though Christianity promulgated what defied comprehension, nothing was beyond apprehension of human reason and intelligence. Even in its most general aspect, the Christian religion touches the secret springs of human nature, satisfies its yearnings, and fills the void into which all preceding creeds had been emptied in vain.

Christianity followed a period in which the material universe and the senses whereby it appeals to us had been all in all to mankind. They were removed from the horizon upon which the gaze of society had been fastened for so long, and other objects, worthy of intense contemplation, placed there instead. This world receded from the views of society before the dazzling brightness of the world to come. The fulfilment of the hope of centuries generated, as was to be expected, an ecstasy in the human heart, which found vent in that severe asceticism of which mediæval history renders many, to us rather astonishing, accounts. The war with man's lower nature was waged then all the more fiercely because of the undisputed and long-continued sway of the passions before the inauguration of this war. Recoiling from that loathsome dominion, the very force of the rebound led to a total spiritualization of life. The victor's crown was not expected here below, but was seen only beyond the grave. These reflections suggest themselves very forcibly as the correct explanation of the ascetic tendency of the Middle Ages, a tendency which has been very severely and very adversely criticised, though the facts warrant only the interpretation which we put upon it.

As the one great foundation of all religions lies in the voice of conscience, in the sense of the infinite, in man's spiritual aspirations, in the need of faith, in short a need universal and unchangeable, so does the strongest evidence of Christianity lie in its unique

accord with every want of man's inner nature. History itself bears out this assertion, for the history of Christianity is the history of the superiority of all Christian nations. As soon as the Western world was filled with the teachings of Christ, the supremacy of the people inhabiting it was established. Progress and civilization appear only as allies of Christianity, so much so that wherever the soil is not first fertilized by it, the engrafting of civilized ideas, refined habits, and cultured social life is altogether impossible. The most avowed atheists even are honest enough to grant that the religion given by Christ to mankind surpasses all preceding systems, while it is a fact recognized by every observant mind of every age since the beginning of our era, that the services rendered by Christianity to mankind in spheres outside of religious teaching are simply immense. Yet, notwithstanding this general encomium of praise bestowed upon it, there has grown up in our times a doubt and a suspicion regarding the future of Christianity with its two thousand years of life. It would be superfluous to say more than simply to state the fact that the downfall of Christianity is not only predicted but believed in by a numerically growing portion of society. The weight to be attached to prognostications of that kind depends, as has been remarked before, upon this test of unfailing character,—can a religious system more fully and more thoroughly in accord with human nature be conceived or not? But a good deal, if not all of what has so recently been predicated of Christianity, does not require an inquiry into an abstract problem. It is simply necessary to define clearly the different meaning of the term "Christianity" when applied to mediæval and to modern times.

Up to the time of the Reformation the Christian religion was practically a unit and coextensive with Catholicity. Since then, however, the word Christianity has been used somewhat loosely as comprising Catholicity and Protestantism. Between these two forms of religion there are radical differences, which render it obviously clear that what may be truthfully asserted of the one need not apply at all to the other. Christianity and Catholicity were once interchangeable terms, but they have ceased to be so, and hence the fatal confusion.

Protestantism is, at best, Christianity on sufferance. Apart from a theistic conception of God it has little in common with Catholicity. The more conservative Protestant denominations preserve, of course, a greater semblance to original Christianity than the more advanced, liberal churches, of which not a few are openly disavowed by the former as not Christian. With dissensions in the family we have here, however, nothing to do. Since its origin Protestantism has been suffering from internal disintegration,

the process of splitting up, a process very marked and very rapid, is still going on. It does not matter how near to the line which forever divides the Catholic Church from Protestantism some sects may approach, how far others stand off; for that line is like the equator, a mathematical line in its distinctness. Whosoever is not north of it is necessarily south.

Now Protestantism, in general, was an attempt on the part of its founders to effect a compromise between the material world of old and the supernatural world of Christianity. The life of the passions, strong at all times, revolted against the severe discipline of mediæval times, introduced into these by the fervor of ecstasy. With the lapse of years that fervor lost its intensity, and in proportion as it subsided did the rule of passions make headway, until towards the close of the fifteenth century it had acquired an overpowering ascendency and crept into Church and society. Reformation was, indeed, needed within and without. Within, where it was brought about by legitimate means, the end was accomplished, and it was accomplished solely because the Christian religion was left unchanged in its entirety. Without, however, it resulted in vain endeavors to reconcile the irreconcilable, and hence its failure. The uncompromising attitude of Christianity towards materialism of any kind displeased the Reformers. Some concessions to man's lower nature were therefore made, and so much thrown overboard as was too directly in opposition with these concessions. In the course of time materialism overshadowed more and more the fragments of Christianity, which still had been retained, and, by degrees, the principle of private judgment cut loose from all those indispensable adjuncts of religion, without which it can neither fulfil its own mission nor satisfy the human heart.

That a few shabby tinsels of Christianity do not appeal with any force to men of intelligence who recognize the true mission of religion, is not in the least to be wondered at. Nor, again, can we wonder that this portion of society, after having ceased to believe in the creed of a Protestant church, turns with serious expectations to the physical sciences which have achieved so much, and believes them to hold the promise of evolving a religious system less out of joint with human nature than the one they abandoned with the hopeless reluctance of despair. It is rather natural that the religion-seeking world should turn in that very direction, for they perceive that accord with nature is the *sine quâ non* of religion. Looking for that, and knowing that the scientists unravel nature's mysteries, the situation itself seems to point out that they have chosen the right path. Yet if they look to science for the lost treasure they deceive themselves, like those scientists who indulge in the same hopefulness. Science can never unravel more than

the one part of human nature which is open to inspection of the closest and most minute character. If it gives, some day, a full and correct account of man's physical nature, its mission will be ended. The voice of the heart will ever tell many things which the senses cannot and do not report, and reveal much that is, indeed, not opposed to the senses, but above the senses. Conscience, free-will, moral responsibility, they are not matter, substance, in fine, material, in the strictest sense of the word. They will ever reach out into and belong to the non-physical order. The negation of the latter implies the negation of all three. For, can moral responsibility be rationally conceived without one to whom we are responsible? Is free-will not a farce if the distinctions between right and wrong are withdrawn? Is conscience thinkable without some sort of faith? Yet, strange to observe, the very ones who emphatically deny the existence of a supernatural order, and of a God in the Christian acceptation of the term, declare in the same breath moral responsibility not abrogated, free-will not impaired, conscience not annulled. It is certain, at all events, that science could only establish a Godless religious cult, and to that the consent of man's nature can never be obtained for any length of time, because it would soon prove itself incapable of standing that crucial test to which we have referred already, "full accord with the wants of human nature;" a test which the religions of the future will have to stand, as well as those of the past.

It may not be superfluous to single out one case in which the incompetency of Protestantism to stand this test is well brought to light.

Confession, as is well known, is in the Catholic Church not only a sacrament, but a matter of obligation upon all its members without exception. It is, therefore, beyond question a very characteristic mark of Catholicity, *i. e.*, Christianity. Protestantism refuses to recognize confession as a tenet of vital import, either as a matter of belief or as of any practical value in regard to human nature. Ritualism, in its most advanced form, goes so far as to accept confession as a sacramental rite, whatever that may mean, but it leaves it optional with its members to avail themselves of it. Outside of the small body of Ritualists, confession is tabooed, abhorred, shunned. Now, then, what we have to examine into is not whether auricular confession has been abused or not, nor whether such a tremendous power as the one of forgiving sins has been lodged with the priesthood, nor, again, whether it was wise to intrust into the safekeeping of frail human nature so enormous a prerogative; all this is here quite foreign matter and perfectly irrelevant. What we have to ascertain is simply this: Does confession correspond

to a want of human nature, or does it not? Is there something within our structure which makes us desirous of an unburdening? In short, is there any need for confession as a sacrament and as a binding obligation, or is there none?

Confession would be turned at once into a ridiculous absurdity if all men lived without ever swerving or being liable to swerve from the standard of absolute righteousness. It is very plain that if there is nothing to confess, confession is superfluous. But it is only necessary to recall the very general outcry that has been raised at the time of the proclamation of the dogma of infallibility, in order to be able to assert positively that, by universal consent, human nature is considered liable to do wrong. Infallibility, of course, does not mean impeccability, but it was largely understood to imply as much, which was the cause of the very just and very general protest. Human society was thus perfectly unwilling to admit that but one human being at a time, and that an old and virtuous man as a rule, could possibly be exempt from going astray. We may draw from this verdict the inference that all mortals, without exception, that is to say, the whole race, in all its component parts, are considered liable to transgress the divine law. Now, if this universal liability does exist, it is fair to presume that a good many individuals leave now and then the narrow paths of righteousness. And if so, why should not those who offend God, whom they adore as their Creator and Father, feel towards Him the same generous impulse which prompts a well-brought-up child, if it breaks anything which it was forbidden to touch, to run up to his parents, own up the mischievous deed, and implore among tears their forgiveness? That sentiment in children is not found fault with by the most confirmed unbeliever, for it strikes home in its touching simplicity. But the selfsame feeling evinced by the children of God towards Him, their heavenly Father, is made sport of. Both cases are exactly alike; there is transgression in the one, there is transgression in the other. And so are the motives alike, be they love or fear; that is to say, sorrow for the transgression, or the dread of punishment. Nay, further than this: we venture to assert boldly that any parent would much rather have his child run up, less on account of an anticipation of being chastised, than because of real sorrow for having done something which will grieve the parent. It is human nature to feel so as parents, matter and substance and all their properties notwithstanding. And the Catholic Church teaches that precisely the same relationship exists between God and man, and proclaims that sorrow over sins resulting from love far exceeds a contrition prompted by fear. Nor is this all. Society readily acknowledges that a wrong confessed is

half atoned for. There is the further evidence of criminals who escape the hand of justice, but who find no rest until their deeds are confessed, and who therefore surrender themselves. From all these considerations it seems that confession must be regarded as an evidence of good-will on the part of the wrongdoer to right the wrong. If there are consciences dulled to such an extent that such desire rise no more in them, it is to be hoped their number forms an infinitesimal fraction of human society. For all, except such, confession appears as a means devised by Supreme Wisdom for an end, which end is to help human frailty onward, to encourage the despondent, to lift up the outcast, in fine, to succor nature when succor is needed. Can it be said that confession does not meet frail mortals half-way?

The future of Christianity has, thus, not yet been dimmed by any shadows. It cannot be doubtful as long as it preserves those integral characteristics which stamp upon it the seal of genuineness through nature itself. Whatever doleful predictions are made apply not to Catholicity, the only true religion. Christianity is not Protestantism, and should not be confounded with it. Christianity is always Catholic, Protestantism always exclusive. The ship of society lost the old moorings, the cargo of science shifted in the hold, the compass pointed in the wrong direction, and thus it is drifting with the high tide. When the ebb tide sets in, and the breakers ahead will be seen, society will verify the compass, and, guided by the unfailing yearnings of the heart, it will make land and find again the God-man, who stands there with the beacon-light of truth, whom to know is to possess life, but of whom St. Augustine truly said, "non cognoscitur nisi amando."

BOOK NOTICES.

THE STORY OF THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION. By *A. Wilmot, F.R.G.S.* London: Burns and Oates. 1883.

The true history of the "Reformation in Scotland" remains still to be written. Anti-Catholic historians have expended more labor and skill in explaining away or varnishing over its horrible atrocities than in their accounts of the Reformation movement in any other country. Their purpose indeed required it, for in no other country was the great revolt against the Church accompanied with more cruelty, treachery and heinous crimes than there. John Knox, who was its heart and soul, was the personification of coarseness, vulgarity, brutality and utter disregard of truth and honor. He was at once a coward and a bully, an arrant, shameless hypocrite, and the instigator, abetter and apologist of assassination. Even anti-Catholic historians furnish in their one-sided statements abundant testimony that though great abuses had come to exist in the administration and discipline of the Church in Scotland, and of the Prelates and Priests led unedifying lives, yet the so-called Reformation movement had not its root and origin in any sincere desire to correct those abuses, but in the ambition of turbulent nobles and the fanaticism and craving for notoriety and for gain of rude and coarse demagogues, who found in the preaching of the new doctrines an easy means of becoming prominent.

As for Catholic authors, they have written sketches rather than histories of the Reformation in Scotland, or made special studies of some particular parts of it. Perhaps this is fortunate. Until a few years back the available material for a full history of the Scottish Reformation was very scanty. Many important papers that have recently been discovered were unknown or supposed to have been irrecoverably lost or destroyed. Others were beyond reach, being kept from examination among the secret state papers of the English government. But, partly through the spirit of research and investigation of original sources of history which is a prominent characteristic of our times, and partly through the freer examination of its archives, which the government of England has permitted during late years, many valuable documents and papers have become known, which throw light on a number of matters, connected with Scottish history in the sixteenth century that previously were very obscure.

The time, therefore, seems to have arrived when some competent hand should treat exhaustively the Reformation movement in Scotland, and paint in their real colors the motives and characters of the prominent leaders and supporters of that movement—a movement that involved more of confusion, treachery, falsehood, and cold-blooded atrocities than almost any other that history records.

The work before us does not claim to be a history but rather a popular sketch—"the story" of the Scottish Reformation. It is brief, and touches only the salient points of the movement. Its first chapter, which is introductory, is a valuable popular sketch of Scotland under her earlier Catholic kings. At the close of the thirteenth century, Scotland, in comparison with her natural resources and despite the

unfavorable influences of frequent hostilities with England, and the turbulence of semi-independent feudal chieftains, was, to use the words of a Protestant writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, "a rich, prosperous, and happy country." In contrast with this he proves, employing exclusively the testimony of non-Catholic writers, Macaulay, Buckle, Cockburn, Irving, Tyler, Giles, Lord John Russell, Charteris, Tallock, and others, the miserable social, religious, and industrial condition of Scotland, after Protestantism had acquired full sway and done its bad work; that there was neither civil nor religious liberty; that representation of the people in Parliament was a complete farce; that the commissioners of the burghs were mere retainers of the great nobles; that the Scottish Kirk was an organized system of cruel grinding tyranny, to which resistance became impossible, and under which the Presbyterian ministers enforced intolerable and almost incredible pretensions, interfering not only with the general government of the country, but with the domestic and private concerns of every individual in it; that they fostered a system of Phariseeism and hypocrisy, united with ignorance, superstition and immorality; that numbers of infirm and aged women were burned as witches; that there was no free press, no free public meetings, and no better trial by jury even in political cases (except treason) than by jurors who were named in court by the presiding judge; that learning was positively discouraged, many of the Scottish divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries declaiming against it; that education was neglected, and universities languished; and that barn-like structures took the places of the noble temples of Catholicism, which the fanatical leaders of the Reformation and their deluded followers had destroyed. As for music, painting, architecture, and the cultivation of the fine arts generally, and of polite literature, a persistent hatred of them characterized the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. These statements, as we have already remarked, are all supported by the testimony of non-Catholic writers.

To those who have only a superficial acquaintance with the history of Scotland, and its condition previous to the sixteenth century, the rapid progress of the Reformation movement in that country seems to be difficult of explanation. The author of the work before us states some of the causes very clearly. He shows that, in great degree, it was the work of an oligarchy.

The nobles of Scotland were very powerful. In their pride and their semi-independence they were constantly engaged in savage warfare, sometimes among themselves, more frequently with their sovereign. They murdered James I., rebelled against James II., murdered James III., imprisoned James V., confined Mary in the Castle of Lochleven, and afterwards deposed her. Their numerous conspiracies form almost a framework to Scottish history. They were a scourge and curse to the country. War and rapine were their principal employments, and insecurity so generally prevailed that peaceful pursuits were almost impossible. Savage incursions from the Highlands and frequent, sanguinary, and long-continued wars with England desolated the conntry. The policy of the English government, even when nominally at peace with Scotland, aggravated this condition. That government constantly had Scottish nobles in its pay, and constantly fomented conspiracies and rebellions. The conformation of the country favored this turbulence of the nobles. Its fens and morasses, lakes and mountains rendered many of their retreats almost inaccessible.

As for the people they were divided into clans, and were serfs or dependents of their feudal chieftains. There was no middle station between

proud and powerful landlords and those who, having no property to lose, were ready to obey their every behest, and engage in any tumult they instigated. For independent yeomen and prosperous merchants, tradesmen, and artisans, there was no possible ground to stand on. As for the burgesses or inhabitants of towns, they were completely under the sway of powerful nobles who ruled them with an iron hand.

This state of things became still worse during the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth; throughout all which period the rulers of England constantly supported and bribed with money and pensions many of the Scottish nobles, who formed an irresistible party of traitors both to the Catholic Church and the secular sovereign of Scotland. A number of apostate priests, of infamous morals, John Knox prominently of their number, were used as their tools and helpers.

In addition to these facts, the almost constant warfare by which Scotland had been cursed, not only between her nobles, but between them and her kings, and with England, had produced an exceedingly unfavorable influence upon education, upon morals, and upon ecclesiastical discipline and administration. This is so obvious that it is unnecessary to dilate upon it. Scotland, too, from her geographical position, was very remote from Rome. Frequent and immediate communication with the Holy Roman See was almost impossible. And all history proves that nations have become corrupt in proportion to their separation and alienation from the visible Head of the Church. Thus in Scotland the secular power tyrannized over Church dignitaries, and owing to their remoteness from Rome and the unfrequency of their communications with the Holy Roman See, they failed to obtain the spiritual strength and support necessary to enable them to resist. They became, with some exceptions, mere dependents on the secular power. The secular power also thrust its own creatures into sacred offices, and maintained them there contrary to the canons of the Church. Illegitimate children of James V., for instance, were appointed abbots and priors of Holyrood, Kelso, Melrose, Coldingham, and St. Andrew's. They received the incomes of benefices, but committed their charge to others. They seldom took orders, yet they ranked as clergymen; and by their vices they brought disgrace upon the whole clerical body. That a sad degeneration of clerical morals should result from this was inevitable. The doctrine of the Church remained incorrupt and unchanged, but grievous scandals necessarily came to exist. And these scandals furnished a pretext which ambitious, rebellious, proud, ignorant, and fanatical men eagerly seized upon for denouncing the Church, which opposed, condemned, and strove to eradicate the abuses from which these scandals arose.

The author then sketches, furnishing abundant proof for all he says from Protestant authorities, the horrible story of the Scottish Reformation, its atrocities and revolting crimes, the coarseness, cruelty, hypocrisy, and treachery of its chief promoters, Ruthven, Lindsay, Buchanan, Morton, Bothwell, Maitland, Murray, and Knox; a band of scoundrels, notorious profligates, who were alike Pharisees and hypocrites in religion, and traitors to their country, in constant communication with the English crown, receiving its money, revealing to it the secrets of the government of Scotland, and making themselves the paid tools of Elizabeth and her counsellors. Prominent in the dreary recital of constant conspiracy and crime is the account of John Knox, fitly characterized by Dr. Johnson as "the ruffian of the Reformation." He shows by indisputable proofs, that Knox habitually resorted to falsehood, treachery, and murder, and defended them as means that, when necessary to accomplish certain ends, were justifiable.

With regard to the author's estimate of the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scotland, he lays himself open to criticism in several ways. His opinions, perhaps, are too dogmatically expressed respecting points about which interminable controversy has been waged, and which we see no prospect of definitely deciding, though recent investigations have shed additional light upon them. His account of her vacillations and indecision, of her relation to the murder of Darnley, her subsequent marriage with Bothwell, and her alleged connection with plots and conspiracies intended not only to release her from imprisonment in England, but also to assassinate Elizabeth, will be regarded as too favorable by some, and not sufficiently so by very many others.

The style of the work is defective; in some places inexcusably rough and inaccurate. There are a number of typographical errors, too, which show careless proof-reading.

Mediæval Civilization. By *George Burton Adams*, Professor of History in Drury College. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1883.

To write history truly three things are necessary: First, to ascertain the real facts; second, to arrange and state them properly, and with due regard to their actual relations one to another, and due regard, also, to their causes and consequences; third, to properly explain and exhibit their interior meaning and significance. To achieve any one of these requisites is a work of great difficulty; the attainment of all is even approximately possible to very few.

With respect to the first condition, great progress has been made of late years through the labors of antiquarians and the researches of explorers of the original sources of history, the discovery of recently discovered manuscripts supposed to have been irrecoverably lost, and the opening to public or private examination of government archives and other depositories of papers and documents which, from reasons of state policy or other motives, have been jealously kept secret. The study of these historical materials and the searching criticism to which they have been subjected, have thrown light upon many subjects of history which heretofore have been involved in seemingly hopeless obscurity and confusion.

Progress, too, though not equally great, has been made in the second requisite—the proper arrangement of historical facts and of their resulting consequences. But as to the third, the exhibition of the real interior significance of the facts and events narrated, a like remark cannot be made. Historical writers of the present age, it is true, ostensibly aim at this. Indeed, they professedly make it the chief object and design of their works. They choose positions, which they regard as central, from which to view the events they describe. They form theories according to which they explain facts, giving prominence by a species of rhetorical perspective to those which fit into and confirm their theory, and placing obscurely and with diminished proportions in the background those which are irreconcilable with their preconceived idea.

But this is not history; it is a perversion of history. And it is all the more effective, because of the seeming fairness and candor of the writer, who, apparently keeping his own ideas in reserve, is yet suggesting them on every page. The *proton pseudos* of this school of historians, and it is now the popular school, is not in the fact that they have a philosophy of history before they begin to write, which serves as a clue to guide them through the labyrinth of facts and events of past ages,—for, without some such philosophy, they would be mere chroniclers.

The error is in selecting a point of view of their own choosing, instead of adopting that which divine revelation makes known. All history is but the exhibition in time of God's will, carrying out His purposes on earth through human factors, leaving them in perfect possession of their own free will. Any other standpoint than this from which to view history is necessarily false. For from no other standpoint can due prominence be given to what, even considered in the light of mere human reason, is the most momentous fact of all ages—the Incarnation, and to what of all other institutions is the most powerful and far-reaching in its influence—the Church.

Yet history is now commonly written from every other standpoint than this. The whole tendency of our age, outside of the Catholic Church, is to ignore it. The events of past times are looked at and attempted to be explained from purely natural causes, as though God did not exist, or, if existing, had no concern in the movements of mankind, and no power to direct or control them. The existence of Christianity, its diffusion, influences and effects; the existence of the Church, its organization, its power, relation to civilization, secular government, literature, art, morality, and all the concerns of society, are attempted to be explained as simply the evolution of human thought and action.

This is clearly the underlying idea of the work before us. Mediæval Christendom, according to the author, was formed "by the force of certain ideas and of certain institutions, in which those ideas were embodied, the scattered fragments of which were artificially held together, as it were, until a natural and organic unity could begin to arise." "The first of these, the Holy Roman Empire, was an idea, a sentiment, a belief, the product of memory and imagination" "The other, the Roman Church, was a great institution, an institution founded in part upon this same belief. . . . The idea embodied in the theory of the Holy Roman Empire out of the idea which the later Romans held, an idea made familiar to us in the lines of Virgil:

> "His ego nec metas rerum, nec tempora pono;
> Imperium sine fine dedi—"

. . . . "This, then, was the idea, the belief, created by memory and the imagination, which acted as one of the great forces to prevent Europe from splitting into fragments. . . . But this theory had its counterpart. Beside the one representative of God in matters temporal, sat the one representative of God in matters spiritual. In the theory, the one Holy Roman Emperor has his complement in the one Holy Father, the head of the Catholic Church." . . . "The steps by which the Roman ecclesiastical system was built up form one of the most interesting subjects of study in the history of civilization. . . . It has been said by Macaulay that there is not, and never was on this earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church."

This is the author's ruling hypothesis. The Church is a system of human policy. Its unity is a part of that system and one of its products. Its organization and growth are the results of purely human thought and human action. Its influence and power are products of the same causes.

Thus, the Catholic Church, according to our author, was, on the whole, a beneficial institution during the Middle Ages, and assisted in establishing civil order, and promoting art and literature, because it suited those times. But it has remained stationary, while society has constantly advanced. Consequently, it has fallen behind in the onward

movement of humanity, and is now an obstacle in the way of that movement. "The Roman Catholic Church," to quote again, "is no important contribution to the permanent civilization of the race. No great work of to-day is building upon it, as there is upon the scientific work of the Greeks, or upon the [1]gospel of John. It was a scaffold erected that the building might go on, but no stone itself wrought into the walls."

The Middle Ages "were dark ages—that is, they were ignorant and superstitious ages, and could not have been otherwise. . . . A pure Christianity, could it have been maintained, might have furnished the conditions of progress in knowledge. But Christianity had fallen into the hands of ignorant, and, worse still, into the hands of selfish men, and, though its true light continued to shine from century to century, yet it shone but dimly, and in its proper place men had set up a misleading *ignis fatuus*."

After this statement of the author's leading idea, it is unnecessary to criticise details. Suffice it to say that, according to this author, the Popes were simply ecclesiastical politicians, ruled by like motives to those which actuated secular princes, though frequently less sagacious and very commonly more obstinate and domineering than the kings and emperors over whom they claimed to exercise supremacy. As regards religion, superstition was the prevailing characteristic of Catholicity, while the Waldensian and Albigensian movements were "attempts to introduce a purer Christian life and practice," and Wycliff and John Huss were forerunners of Luther and the Reformation, which movement, as regards religion, "means a return to primitive Christianity," and, as regards knowledge, "means that ignorance and superstition have been so far subdued."

That the author is not up with the times in his historical studies—even from a non-Catholic view—is so evident from the exhibit we have made of his general ideas, as scarcely to require explicit mention. His work abounds in misstatements of historical facts, which no one acquainted with more recent researches in history could honestly make.

LEAVES FROM THE ANNALS OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY. In three volumes. Volume II. Containing Sketches of the Order in England, at the Crimea, in Scotland, Australia, and New Zealand. By a Member of the Order of Mercy, Authoress of the "Life of Catherine McAuley," "Life of St. Alphonsus," "Life of Venerable Clement M. Hoffbauer," "Glimpses of Pleasant Homes," etc. New York: The Catholic Publication Society. 1883.

The author, in her preface to this volume, says, "We disclaim intending to give a complete history of the Order of Mercy. We have merely described," she says, "what we have seen or what circumstances have brought to our knowledge. And we have kept chiefly to its earlier years and placed upon the candlestick, to shine to all the household, those valiant groups who now rest from their labors." The work, it seems, was at first "intended for private circulation only," and "the immense sale of the first volume was a genuine surprise" to the writer. It certainly was no surprise to those who have read that volume. The scenes and incidents described, the early struggles of the Order for existence and ecclesiastical approval, the self-denying, arduous and blessed labors of the Sisters, are narrated in such admirable manner that readers could scarcely fail to be both deeply interested and edified.

The second volume narrates the establishment of the Order and the

[1] The omission of the capital letter to "Gospel" is the author's.

labors of its members in England, at the Crimea during the war of England, France, Piedmont, and Turkey, against Russia, in Scotland, and in Australia and New Zealand.

The accounts of the establishment of the Order in the "Channel Islands," beginning with Guernsey, and of the labors of the Sisters in the Crimea, are to us specially interesting. Upon Guernsey soil, up to 1868, no nun's foot had rested for over three centuries. The bigotry of the Protestants was such that many were enrolled in a society which binds them by oath, "never to speak to a priest or nun and never to enter a Catholic Church." The Catholic priest, "so holy and zealous as to be styled a second Curé d'Ars, was anxious to have a convent, but felt timid in inviting nuns to so poor a country." By direct interposition of the Blessed Virgin the way was opened. Four Sisters of the Order were sent from Brighton. The works of mercy they instituted, instructing the ignorant, protecting orphans, visiting the sick, etc., increased with the labor they expended on them, and now fifteen Sisters are doing the work of thirty among the simple and poor of that island, who are almost as separated from the current of the world's life which sweeps around them as though they were inhabitants of another planet. A number of conversions have been made of Protestants, and so great is the persecution to which they are subjected by the Protestant population that numbers of these converts have been obliged to leave the island. Very many bad Catholics, chiefly of the free-thinking class, have been reclaimed and converted. The pupils attending the schools of the Order exhibit exemplary docility, and their number has increased until the Sisters find their energies taxed to the utmost to instruct them. Alderney, an island rock "rising out of the midst of seething waves," measuring only four miles in length and two in breadth, has a convent of the Order of Mercy, "poor and humble as the stable of Bethlehem." The humorous and comical descriptions of the visits of the Sisters to the rude and ignorant but quaint, simple-hearted inhabitants of these islands, their conversations with them on the roads, in the fields, and at their homes, and their success in reclaiming them to attention to their religious duties, are very amusing, and at the same time instructive and edifying.

Even more interesting, though in another way, are the chapters which give an account of the labors of the Sisters in the Crimea. The English government was in the greatest need of their services, yet requested them with a hesitation and timidity that could have scarcely been greater, had it been proposed to it to avail itself of the assistance of an unknown order of beings from the planet Jupiter or one of the other distant planets. But as soon as the Sisters reached the scene of their labors, their success in reducing chaos to order, their patient submission to all manner of self-denial, their quiet efficiency and the successful results attending their care of the sick and wounded, not only quickly won the hearts of the soldiers, but the unlimited confidence of the officers; so that the slightest expression of a wish on their part carried with it the force of a command, and where Lady Nightingale was opposed and resisted, the Sisters were consulted with and their suggestions promptly adopted. Before their arrival Lady Nightingale was in despair, and had practically failed in performing what she had planned and hoped to do. In fact her efforts plainly were failures. The Sisters co-operated with her, supported her, gave efficiency and system to the operations of which she was nominally the head, and allowed her to have all the public prestige of what was accomplished through their labors. But the officers, from the General commanding down, and the common soldiers,

all well understood to whose patience, labors, attention, and untiring energy the blessed results were due. On the return to England, along with the English soldiers, of those of the Sisters whose labors had not been closed by death in the Crimea, the populace were inclined to hoot them on their landing. But at the first demonstration of disrespect, the soldiers levelled their muskets, and would have fired and charged upon the mob, had they not been restrained by their officers, one of whom in indignant terms rebuked the mob and eloquently eulogized the Sisters. Letters from the Inspector-General of Hospitals, British Deputy Surveyor in Chief, from the Commanding General, and from heads of different departments of the British government, and one from the Sultan of Turkey accompanying a donation of £230, testified in the strongest terms to the extent and value of the services rendered by the Sisters.

Want of space prevents us from referring to the facts connected with the establishment and growth of the Order in England, Scotland, Australia and New Zealand, which are recounted in the volume before us. It is not a history nor yet a narrative strictly speaking, but narration, description letters from the Sisters and letters to them, anecdotes, incidents and occurrences, amusing, comical, serious and pathetic, are pleasantly intermingled.

THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER. By *Julius Köstlin*, Professor at Halle. Translated from the German. Edited by John G. Morris, D.D., LL.D. Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society. 1883.

THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER. Compiled from reliable sources, by *Rev. William Strang*. Fr. Pustet & Co., New York and Cincinnati. 1883.

It is by no means too strong a statement of the fact to say that all modern Protestant accounts of Luther's life and character are simply romances. They do not describe him as he was, but as they would have him to be. They do not dare to let him speak out in his own coarse, wicked, and habitually blasphemous language. His furious bursts of passion, akin to those of a madman or a demon; his unblushing confessions of his own wickedness, made from time to time in defiance of decency, and as though an overpowering demoniacal spirit possessed him, and compelled him to publish his own shame; his tergiversations and self-contradictions and falsehoods; his self-confessed lust, and open, public drunken orgies, and the obscene expressions which abound in his writings and his sermons, are all passed over in silence by Protestant writers on Luther. They make quotations from his works, but they are selected and expurgated quotations, with extensive omissions; and the language of the passages that are quoted is changed and softened down so as not to offend decency and propriety. To publish, in a literal English translation, some of Luther's discourses—that on matrimony, for instance,—would subject the publishers to indictment for publishing obscenity, while the publication of others would subject them, in like manner, to the charge of blasphemy.

These very characteristics of Luther constitute a serious difficulty to Catholic students and writers exposing fully to public view what Luther really was, and to their depicting him in his true colors. They are compelled to exercise a certain degree of reticence, and to abstain from giving to the public, in their actual coarseness and rudeness and revolting indecency, the proofs which Luther himself furnishes in his life and writings, and which his contemporaries fully confirm, of his shameless, defiant wickedness.

These may seem to non-Catholics,—who have accepted without investigation, or with only superficial investigation, the ideal but utterly false portrait of Luther, which Protestant writers have painted,—strong, perhaps unwarranted assertions. Yet the proofs that they are the simple truth, are more than sufficient. They abound in Luther's own writings, as we have already said, in those of his co-laborers and followers, in those of other Protestant "Reformers" who differed with him, quarrelled with him, opposed him, and denounced him, as well as in the writings of Catholics of the age in which he lived.

It may seem strange, too, at first thought, that Protestant members of sects whose founders Luther violently denounced, and who in turn denounced him with equal violence, should now unite with professed Lutherans, in concealing his true character, and eulogising him as a sincere and holy man. The explanation is easy and obvious. However they may differ in religious opinions from those which professedly, but to a large extent no longer really, believe what is still called Lutheran doctrine, they realize that Luther was the chief founder and promoter of the revolt against the authority of the Church, which is miscalled "the Reformation." However, therefore, Luther may have opposed the opinions of the sects to which they adhere, and however strenuously the founders of those sects may have opposed Luther, they cannot now denounce or disparage him without exposing the rottenness and utter instability of the basis on which Protestantism fundamentally rests. Moreover, among all Protestant sects, definite religious opinions, or doctrines, as they style them, are no longer considered of vital importance. They change, too, as incessantly as the shifting figures of a child's kaleidoscope.

The first above-mentioned work is now regarded by Lutherans in Germany as a classic biography of Luther, and we doubt not that the English translation before us will be held in like esteem in this country. Its author has evidently given much labor to its preparation, and, evidently, is aware that the intelligent will no longer, unhesitatingly and without allowance, accept the ordinary Protestant accounts of Luther and of the corruptions of the Catholic Church. Consequently he avoids the grosser falsehoods and misrepresentations of these Protestant *romances*, miscalled histories, and adopts a tone of studied calmness and moderation in his statements. "This course," says the American editor, "necessarily divests the book of that superficial and, I may say, dramatic character which is the chief attraction of so many popular lives."

The author of the work styles it "a life picture" . . . "offered to the cultured readers of Germany." So far as it is a "picture" at all, it is one not of the actual Luther but of an ideal Luther, according to the author's conceptions. No portrait painter has displayed more skill in idealizing an actually ugly face by softening its coarse features, and changing its rude expression into one of amiability, than has the author in toning down and minimizing ugly facts in Luther's history where mention of them could not be avoided. Numerous references are made to Luther's writings. The preface says that analyses are given of them all (though we have not been able to find analyses of a number of them), but the manner in which the "analyses" are made suggests the idea that the writer has preferred, for obvious reasons, to "analyze" them in his own language rather than to summarize them in Luther's own words. Numerous brief quotations, it is true, are given, but they are always those in which as little as possible of Luther's characteristic violence, coarseness, bitterness of spirit and vemon, appear. No one would suppose, from the author's account of Luther's disputations with Catholics and with "Re-

formers" who agreed with him in common hatred of the Catholic Church, that these disputations were other than theological discussions conducted on Luther's side with strict regard for truth and with Christian moderation, calmness, and courtesy. Occasional admissions, it is true, are made that Luther spoke or wrote "in the fervent language of indignation," but these acknowledgments are made in such a way that they conceal rather than express the truth with regard to his habitual passion, rage, abusive personalities, and use of epithets that outraged all decency.

Skilful *suppressio veri* is a striking characteristic of the work. Luther's continual inconsistencies and self-contradictions, his arrogance, violence and fury, of which even his friends bitterly complain, the venomous spirit which runs through all his controversial writings, those against fellow-Reformers who dared to differ from him as well as those against the Church and the Papacy, are entirely kept out of view. So, too, no one would suspect from reading it that Luther was ever, not to say habitually, profane and obscene. With reference to this, as it plainly appears in many of his writings and in his famous Table-Talk, the author says: "At times expressions and allusions would fall from his (Luther's) lips that seem too unrefined for our ears. But it is at least unpolished naturalness, nothing ambiguous or grossly vulgar."

In short this "Life of Luther" is a life of him, not as he *was*, but as he was *not*.

The second work, above-mentioned, is the production of a Catholic clergyman, who has aimed at giving, for the information of general readers rather than of scholars, a truthful account of who and what Luther was, and of the manner in which he kindled a flame in Europe, which spread with so great rapidity and was so destructive in its effects to morals, to faith, and to the true interests of mankind.

In a volume of small size, the Rev. author has well performed the task he assumed, delicate and difficult as it was, for reasons already given. In brief space he has recounted Luther's real history, and depicted him in his true character. Avoiding unnecessary employment of theological terminology and needless historical details, he has exhibited with sufficient clearness, and in proper manner, the successive steps of Luther's downward course in heresy and schism. He has also narrated concisely, yet with enough fulness to furnish an intelligible idea of the action of the Church, first to reclaim Luther, and then to oppose the spread of his heretical opinions, and also the reason why the revolt against the Church, headed and chiefly guided by Luther, spread with such rapidity.

With the writer's estimates of some of the personages who were prominent in connection with the movement, we do not agree. His account of Erasmus, whom we regard as a trimmer, a literary dilettanti, and "bohemian," destitute of all religious earnestness, eager to air his wit on every and any occasion and subject, and willing to use his pen as would best promote his interests, and secure him notoriety or fame, we think is entirely too favorable. So, too, his statement of the course pursued by Charles V., who then, whatever he may have become in after life, and when he resigned his crown and retired entirely from public life, was more of a politician than a Christian, and who permitted motives of ambition and seeming expediency to rule his actions, and sometimes to cause him to oppose and persecute the Church and its Sovereign Pontiff.

We would also have been glad to have seen a fuller exposition of Luther's denial of the freedom of the human will and the pernicious

effects of that heretical doctrine, and also of his equally pernicious heresy in denying the merits and indeed the possibility of good works. Yet perhaps we could scarcely expect this in the compass of the small volume to which the Rev. author has confined himself.

SERMON AND DISCOURSES. By the Most Rev. *John McHale, D.D.*, Archbishop of Tuam. Edited by Thomas McHale, D.D., Ph.D. Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son. New York: The Catholic Publication Company. 1882.

A volume of sermons, thoughtful, scholarly, and prepared with great care as regards form as well as matter, by the late Archbishop McHale, is about the last thing that would be expected by one who had only a superficial acquaintance with the character of that truly great prelate. A life of incessant activity is not favorable to study. Nor does the necessity of having constantly to deal with difficult and exciting questions requiring practical solution, usually dispose those upon whom such necessity presses to persevere in scholarly pursuits, even where there is a natural inclination to them. Yet though Archbishop McHale's life was emphatically one of action, and of action requiring constant exertion, and often involving bodily exposure, fatigue and danger, he was not less distinguished as a scholar, than as a zealous, self-denying, and untiring worker in the vineyard of our Divine Lord.

The volume before us is a striking proof of this. Among the thirty discourses it contains there is not one that has, either in thought or expression, any marks of carelessness or haste in its preparation. They treat on subjects of first importance, and treat them lucidly yet profoundly and exhaustively. As regards style they are specimens of pure, terse, elegant, strong English.

In the arrangement of these sermons and discourses in the volume before us, those on great truths of religion and detached moral subjects are placed first in order. Then follow those delivered on Church festivals. After these are a number of discourses delivered on special occasions, such as charity sermons, the Profession of a Nun, the Dedication of a church, the Consecration of a Bishop; sermons delivered at the Synods of Thurles and Tuam, and then four discourses addressed at different times to the theological students of the College of Maynooth.

During the winter of 1831–32 Archbishop McHale delivered by request a series of sermons in the Church of Gesù e Maria at Rome. They were so highly esteemed that four of them, treating severally on Death, on the Sacrament of Penance, on the General Judgment, and on the Preaching of St. John the Baptist, were translated into Italian, and published in that language by the then Abbate de Luca, now Cardinal.

The following quotation, taken almost at random from a sermon of Archbishop McHale on Education, will serve to show the clearness and power of statement and argument which characterize all his discourses:

"Let it not be imagined that the peculiar refinements of any country, or its extraordinary advances in civilization, render it less necessary to insist on the predominance of religion in its colleges and schools. In no state of society should education be placed beyond its tutelage; but its vigilance is more particularly required when wealth increases the violence of the passions, and when luxury spreads around the contagion of depraved example. An artificial refinement of manners is no index whatever of innocence, and the examples of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans unquestionably show how frequent is the alliance between vice and science, between a high state of civilization and the most humiliating corruption."

After a brief but very forcible picture of this alliance of vice and science, of immorality and civilization, among the peoples above mentioned, Archbishop McHale thus refers to our own age:

"A similar corruption keeps pace in modern times with the progress of the arts and sciences, among all people whose morals are not controlled by strong religious convictions and protected by the fences of a strict religious discipline. 'Man is prone to evil from his youth,' says the inspired writer, and to curb the growing propensity to vice by training him to the discipline of virtue, becomes, no less than the infusion of knowledge, an essential part of his education. Where virtue, then, is not inculcated by precept and enforced by example, where the early buddings of vice are not nipped as soon as they appear, there the young cannot be placed with safety to society or to themselves. Much less should they be suffered to be trained where the shoots of vice grow and spread with a rank luxuriance. Where there are unsound notions of faith there must be a corresponding decay of morality, and hence, for the protection of the one and the other, the young heirs of God's kingdom should be kept aloof from all schools where, by contact with error and bad practices, their faith might be tainted and their innocence destroyed."

Pious Affections towards God and the Saints; Meditations for Every Day in the Year and for the Principal Festivals. From the Latin of Ven-Nicolas Lancicius, of the Society of Jesus. With Preface by George Porter, of the same Society. London: Burns & Oates. 1883.

Father Lancicius, the author of these Meditations, was for some years, by appointment of the General of the Society of Jesus, Father Claudius Aquarina, Spiritual Father and Confessor to the Roman College. Subsequently he taught theology and Holy Scripture in the College of Wilna, and then became Rector and Provincial. He died on the 16th of May, 1652.

His writings, which are chiefly ascetical, show him a true child of St. Ignatius of Loyola, formed on the doctrine of the Spiritual Exercises, the influence of which, too, can easily be traced in the volume before us. Each Meditation is brief; perhaps they may be thought by some to be too brief. But Father Lancicius explains that he purposely made them brief, concisely summarizing the points in order that the person meditating might himself develop the points and reason on them. This accords with the directions of St Ignatius on this subject. The brevity of the Meditations have another practical merit. They require so little time to read them, that all excuse is taken away, even from the busiest who are disposed to pious reading, for omitting daily to resort to this excellent aid to devout reflection. The matter of the Meditations, it is scarcely necessary to add, is excellent.

The Illustrated Catholic Family Annual for 1884. With Calendars calculated for Different Parallels of Latitude, and adapted for use throughout the United States. New York: The Catholic Publication Society.

The Illustrated Catholic Family Annual for 1884 is fully up to the standard of previous years. In addition to the matter usual to almanacs and calendars, it contains a large amount of other important information and interesting reading; also well-executed woodcuts of famous abbeys, convents and churches, and portraits of many eminent ecclesiastics and religious.

PERIODICAL

70741

DOES NOT CIRCULATE

THIS BOOK MAY NOT BE
TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM